

## Covid-19 Guidelines

Since information is constantly changing, please follow CDC expert advice.

### Goals

To keep the volunteers and people being released safe by limiting the risk of infection.

Guests arriving in Vermont will need to quarantine for 14 days or 7 days and have a negative Covid test on day 7.

### Volunteers:

Volunteers should assess their own health and exposure to limit the risk to the guests.. If a volunteer has been exposed to a positive Covid-19 case, they should not be in contact with anyone for 14 days.

We shall always assume that either the volunteer or the guest could be positive for coronavirus and follow safety protocols to avoid infecting the other person.

Proper safety protocols and screening questions include:

If someone has experienced any of the following in the last three days they should not transport or have contact with our guest and pursue a diagnostic test for Covid-19: atypical cough (a cough unusual for you), atypical shortness of breath, fever, sore throat, muscle pain, chills, repeated shaking with chills, headache, or new onset of loss of taste or smell.

If someone has been in close contact (being within approximately 6 feet for a prolonged period of time) with anyone diagnosed with Covid-19 or who has had any of the symptoms listed above in the last 14 days they should pursue a test or self-isolate for 14 days.

If a volunteer has a fever over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit they should not transport.

In order to leave their home or place of self isolation, it is recommended that people with confirmed infections or symptoms be fever free for 3 days, their respiratory symptoms must be improving AND 10 days must have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Suggestions for transportation while in quarantine.

Prepare the vehicle before picking up the guest by carefully taping a clear divide between the front and back seats with duct tape.. The car windows should remain at least partially open.

Masks should be worn by both parties.

### Communication:

Explain to the newly released guest why all precautions are necessary and that they are needed to protect their wellbeing as well as that of the volunteer. This is our new reality. If they have not already received it, provide the guest written information about covid.

Information from reliable sources should be shared with guests.. It is important to recognize that most asylum seekers come from countries in which the governments constantly lie and manipulate information, therefore they are more likely to be skeptical. This CDC page has several printable materials, available in many languages.

Information in the companioner's language must be provided detailing how shared spaces are to be disinfected. Emphasizing the difference between clean and disinfected might be needed. (This has been true for many of us who are learning new handwashing procedures and disinfecting procedures from the comfort of our own home and in our language.)

Provide a smartphone or tablet with internet access for communication with friends and family. For some people getting information with music and in video format is less stressful. Videos can be sent via WhatsApp or any other messenger app. These are just a sample of what can be shared

### Quarantine space

Put a welcome basket in their room with plenty of snacks and water.

Provide all meals and basic toiletries. Please note some people like to cook and can prepare meals with few ingredients and others don't know how to cook at all. Asking the person directly what their cooking preference and skills is best practice.

Provide plenty of water and other rehydration drinks.

If possible add a mini fridge and microwave to the room.

Videos or graphics are also needed to show how certain electronics work in the home.

Share local emergency lines and inform them when to call 911.

When isolation in a completely private space is not available, either because the companioner is moving in directly with family or with a sponsor, CDC guidelines should be followed. Some of those are:

Clean surfaces using soap and water. Practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces. Make videos of how you clean the shared spaces, this way both parties are not sharing a small space at the same time.

Provide personal cleaning supplies to the companioner. Supplies include tissues, paper towels, cleaners, and EPA-registered disinfectants. Each person should clean their own space.

Provide a thermometer so that the companioner can self-monitor their temperature and symptoms. Here is a sample log if they would like a template to record daily symptoms.

Keep a separate bathroom for the guest if possible. If not possible, practice frequent disinfecting. Both the current occupants of the home and the new arrival should disinfect after each use.

Wash dishes and utensils using gloves and hot water: Handle any used dishes, cups/glasses, or silverware with gloves. Wash them with soap and hot water or in a dishwasher.

Wash your hands after taking off gloves or handling used items.

Remember to sing "Happy Birthday!" while washing your hands :) Here are some other suggestions!

Again, information needs to be shared with the guest in their own language.

Besides having a safe and healthy space to welcome someone into your home, it is very important to remember why we have decided to welcome the companion into our homes and to make that space as welcoming as possible. Remembering that our health is so much more than our immediate physical health and that kind actions, gestures and words can go a long way in supporting everyone's mental wellbeing. Some ways to create a welcoming space are:

Text often and video chat--even though you are in the same house. For some communication, WhatsApp or any other video call service can be used.

Include a map of the neighborhood in case people want to go for walks; if people are experiencing symptoms, they should remain indoors.

Plan social activities that can be done while practicing safe distancing--going for outdoor walks or hikes while maintaining proper distance, for example. If people are experiencing symptoms, they should remain indoors.

Make sure people have space for physical activities and exercise.

After the 14 day isolation period:

Many sponsors and/or family members are still leaving their homes to go to work. The CDC has outlined steps to protect yourself and others during a COVID-19 outbreak. The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person. Recent studies indicate that people who are infected but do not have symptoms likely also play a role in the spread of COVID-19.

The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.

Continue to follow recommended safety protocols, like keeping a 6 ft. distance when possible, wearing a mask, washing your hands or using hand sanitizer regularly, and covering your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough.

Establish house rules and expectations about going out, shopping, cleaning, etc.