

# Supporting Your Older Neighbors in this Time of Need

Looking for a way to help your community while you're home? Here are some low-tech and easy ways to assist your older neighbors, who are particularly vulnerable during this pandemic.



## Let them know you are here to help

Call, email, or knock on your neighbor's door (and then stand six feet away, of course). Give them your contact information in a readily available format, and let them know that you are available for buying groceries, picking up medications, walking dogs or just a regular check-in call.

Even if they don't accept your offer now, they may in the near future, so make sure they know how to reach you.

## Pick up their mail

If their mail or newspaper delivery is outside or in the lobby, offer to arrange a daily pick-up.

## Provide a phone number

**PRACTICAL SUPPORT:** Local phone numbers for an Information and Referral hotline can be found at [211.org](https://www.211.org).

**EMOTIONAL SUPPORT:** The Disaster Distress Helpline, a national hotline that provides immediate crisis counseling for people experiencing emotional distress due to any natural or human-caused disaster, is open 24/7, 365-days-a-year. Your neighbor can call **800-985-5990** to speak with a trained crisis counselor.

## Connect them to a local volunteer network

Ask what kind of help your older neighbor needs, and try to connect them with a local charitable organization or a volunteer-run, community-based [mutual aid group](#) for assistance.

## Help them access telephonic, virtual and delivery options for essential needs and at-home activities

Many healthcare providers, pharmacies, grocery stores and restaurants are quickly adapting to this public health emergency and conducting business in new ways that limit in-person contact. Your neighbor may not be in the know, especially if they lack an internet connection, so offer to help them access these services.

You can also order books, puzzles, and crosswords online and have them delivered directly to your neighbor.

## Help them set up food deliveries

Go to [Meals on Wheels](#) or call **888-998-6325** to find a local provider for your neighbor.

[Umbrella](#), a community platform that helps older adults age in place, is offering grocery delivery and medication pick up for people age 60+ nationwide. They are waiving their membership fee and charging just \$6 per order to help defray costs. You can submit an [online form](#) or call **844-402-2480** to place an order.

## Send cards to your local nursing home

**KID-FRIENDLY ACTIVITY:** Write notes and color pictures to send to your local nursing home residents. Many nursing homes are no longer accepting visitors due to health concerns, and residents would appreciate receiving mail.