

Covid-19 Support Offer

From British Red Cross

Date 19/10/2020

Subject British Red Cross Covid-19 Support Offer

The British Red Cross is ready to help in **Essex** during this local lockdown.

We hope this gives a useful guide to the support we can provide. Please pass this document to any colleagues who may want to talk to us about how we can work together to help those most vulnerable and likely to be worst affected.

Since the outbreak began, our staff and volunteers across the UK have carried out more than a quarter of a million acts of kindness, from delivering food and medicine, to taking people home from hospital, to providing welfare checks and psychosocial support.

Support Line

Our National Covid-19 Support Line – **0808 196 3651** – 10am – 6pm daily (see attached flyer) has helped more than 10,000 callers since April and our volunteers are currently receiving around 600 calls per week nationwide. Our free and confidential support line can:

- Help with practical information and advice
- Provide emotional support
- Connect people with support in their area
- Organise food and prescription deliveries to vulnerable households

Please share the flyer or just the number with anyone you feel could be helped by the support line. If we identify any further support needs while speaking with callers, these will be referred back to the British Red Cross Covid-19 Tactical Cell – a team of staff and volunteers who will contact people to give further support or refer on to another agency that is better placed to help.

Hardship Fund

We have a hardship fund and cash assistance programme to support people without access to money. This can provide people with a cash grant of £120 per month for 3 months, up to a maximum of 3 persons per household. It is a very limited intervention designed to help those most financially impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. For a list of the qualifying criteria, please see the [Hardship Fund Website](#).

Cash Transfer programmes require a level of bureaucracy which can be time-consuming and labour intensive for Local Authorities to meet. In order to be as useful as possible, we

have simplified the process and are taking organisations on as referral partners, thereby taking most of the bureaucracy on ourselves. We would like to bring local partners on board as a referral partner and the Hardship Fund team are standing by to fast-track the process for you – please email hardshipfund@redcross.org.uk for more information or to begin the process.

Volunteers

We have many volunteers in the **Essex** area who are ready, willing and able to support vulnerable or isolated people in the area. Some are DBS checked, others are not. The non-DBS checked volunteers can help with:

- Food sorting and delivery to vulnerable households
- Telephone 'check-in and chats' with lonely and isolated people
- Leaflet drops in partnership with **Essex County Council** and our emergency response partners

The DBS checked volunteers can help with everything listed above and:

- Prescription delivery to vulnerable households
- Patient transport services
- Welfare checks

If you have a request which falls outside the listed activities or if you are otherwise unsure whether we can support you, please get in touch by emailing louisepalk@redcross.org.uk .

Accessing British Red Cross Support

We hope that these additional services help to support the most vulnerable and those in the most need. If you are interested in accessing any of these services, or you have another request for support that you'd like to run by us, you can do so by completing [this digital form](#) and providing a brief overview of your need.

Our Covid-19 tactical cell will then be in touch to either gather further information, accept your request or forward it to another voluntary agency who are better placed to help.

We look forward to working with you in these challenging times.

All the best,

Louise Palk.

Louise Palk

Covid Tactical Cell Lead and Area Director for the South East
British Red Cross