

Disability Concerns check-in, call script, planning guidelines

This is a sample script for checking in with church members—with and without disabilities—who may be among the compromised health population in your church/neighborhood or who are without any of the regular supports and services they depend on, especially if they're on their own or moderately independent. Adapt any of the three steps outlined as necessary.

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First step: make an initial introductory contact by phone

(if there's no answer, leave a message and send an email)

Hi, _____. *[insert name and greeting]*

_____ *[insert name of your church or your leadership/care role, as appropriate]* understand/understands that it can be difficult to navigate the current Coronavirus crisis. We are committed to making sure that those at risk and people with disabilities in particular are supported throughout this time. You are part of our _____ *[insert church, group, or neighborhood, as appropriate]*, and we care about you!

If you would like to be placed on our Call List, we'd be glad to contact you once a week to chat, to make sure your questions are answered, and to assist as needed in connecting you to the resources you need to make it through. Please contact us and leave a call-back number. Together, we can do this!

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Second step: support call script

Person's Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

(Let individual know that you are checking because of the Coronavirus)

1. Are you feeling all right? _____

2. If you rely on a caregiver, friends, or family to help with independent living, is that person still available to help you? (indicate **Yes** or **No**)
If not, is there anyone else available who might assist you? _____

3. Who is your support network? Who can you call on for help? _____

4. Do you have adequate food, water, and medications to last the next 2 weeks? _____

5. Are you coping all right emotionally? _____

6. Is there anything we can do to help? _____

Would you like a follow-up phone call? (indicate **Yes** or **No**)

Are follow-up services required for this individual? If so, what? _____

Volunteer/Staff Name: _____ Date: _____

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Third step: designing a plan (if needed)

Coronavirus is an infection of the lower respiratory tract; it usually results in pain in the lungs rather than the head. As the number of people contracting the Coronavirus climbs, having a plan for how we'll respond can help bring peace of mind.

First, know the signs. The most common symptoms are:

- Cough: it may be a dry cough or coughing up sputum or thick phlegm
- Fever
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

In addition, you may experience the following symptoms:

- Bone or joint pain
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Chills
- Nausea or vomiting
- Stuffy nose

Symptoms may appear 2 to 14 days after being exposed, with the average onset at 5 days from exposure. Most people who contract the Coronavirus have mild to moderate symptoms. You will need to **self-monitor for these signs**, and if you find you are experiencing them, put your plan into effect.

Who could you call on for help if you do get sick? Make a list of the family members, caregivers, and friends you can call on to help you if you get sick. Have their contact information listed too so you can connect with them easily. **Let them know if you are exhibiting signs** so they can follow up and check in with you periodically to make sure you're okay; arrange a day and time for a phone check-in. **They should have a key to your home and know where your Advanced Directives for Medical Care are kept; email your Advance Directives to them and make an electronic copy available for printing or forwarding.** If one has not been completed, give them information about how to do so.

Think about the point **when would you want to see your doctor** if you have more than a mild case. If you have a history of lung problems, you'll especially want to list the point at which you'll want medical intervention. For example, if you find yourself become short of breath, it's time to call the professionals. Tell them to be prepared for a tele-health (phone consultation) rather than going to the doctor's office.

If you require special procedures on a regular basis such as dialysis, or blood pressure checks, etc., **do you have a plan for where you'll go, how you'll get there, and what additional things you might need** if you are unable to go to your usual site? Check on alternative sites you can go to if necessary, and know the routes ahead of time. Bring a phone charger and other necessary items.

If you use a service animal, do you have extra food to get by? Keeping at least a week of extra food on hand is recommended; in this situation at least 2 weeks might be a better idea.

Keep a card with emergency contact information on you at all times. Have your support network listed, as well as medical conditions, medications you take along with dosage and frequency for administering them, and insurance information listed.