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Circles of Care

Tips on Safely Running Errands

One of the easiest things you can do for an older adult is go to the grocery store or pick up small supplies. It may be helpful to establish a standard way of doing things.

General Safety Precautions

When running an errand, protect your safety and that of others.

- Don't go out if you are feeling unwell!
- Always maintain a distance of 6 feet or more (1 ½ arm lengths) from all people, including sales personnel, other customers in stores, and the older adults you are helping.
- Do not shake hands or have physical contact with others.
- Do not enter the home of the individual you are helping.
- Place deliveries at the door, knock or ring the doorbell and then step back.
- Wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and warm water before and after each visit or delivery of items to a person receiving your help.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow.
- Sanitize hands and surfaces before and after each delivery using one of the methods below.

How to Make a Bleach Solution

Be sure to read and follow all precautions on the manufacturer's label on the bleach container. Use only unscented bleach that contains sodium hypochlorite.

To make a bleach solution to **sanitize your hands**:

- Mix ½ to 1 teaspoons bleach with 1 quart of room-temperature water.
- Soak a cloth with the diluted bleach solution.
- Place cloth in a zip lock bag.
- Label the bag: Hand Cloth
- Wipe hands and between the fingers with the cloth thoroughly. Allow to air dry.
- One cloth lasts 24 hours before it must be replaced with a new soaked cloth.
- Discontinue use If you experience a hand rash or irritation.

To make a bleach solution to **sanitize hard surfaces** such as door knobs, handles, steering wheels:

- Mix 1 to 2 teaspoons bleach with 1 quart of room-temperature water.
- Soak a cloth with the diluted bleach solution.
- Place cloth in a zip lock bag. Label the bag: Surface Cloth.
- Wipe surfaces such as such as door knobs, handles, steering wheels with cloth. Allow to air dry.
- One cloth lasts 24 hours before it must be replaced with a newly soaked cloth.
- Discontinue use If you experience a hand rash or irritation.

Preparing to Run an Errand

- Be sure you have the name and address of the locations where the person needs you to go.
- If requested to purchase groceries or supplies, get a written list that includes the:
 - Name and specific brand of each item
 - Size and/or amount of each item

- Can another brand be purchased?
- Assist in preparing the list if needed. A sample list might look like this:

Shopping List

Item and Brand	Size and/or Amount	Substitute	Purchased

Paying for Items

- Is this a gift?
- If not, have a clear plan in place for how items will be paid for.
- Can the person make arrangements for payment to the vendor in advance OR provide you with cash?.
- If the person provides cash, you might want to leave a receipt.
- Pass cash and receipts in an envelope you can set down some place handy.
- Keep that 6-foot distance!

Delivering Purchases

- Leave the bags near the door, text, ring or knock.
- Maintain a 6-foot distance from the person.
- Let the person know if you were unable to purchase any items.
- Remind the older adult to wash their hands following handling items delivered to them and before eating.
- For seniors who are not able to carry the items into their homes: ask the senior to step aside so you can pass without close contact or touching surfaces. Immediately sanitize your hands.
- Arrange a day and time for the next shopping trip.