

Guide for those forced to isolate due to COVID – 19 in relation to obtaining shopping and prescriptions

This guide is only to be used during COVID-19 Pandemic emergency.

This guide sets out some ways of paying for food or other essentials if you are self-isolating.

You should also refer to your bank for safe use of your money and accounts.

If you are isolated due to the Coronavirus then at some point you may need someone to get supplies on your behalf. This guide aims to set out ways of paying for supplies and how to best manage any risk around financial transactions. If you do need to give money to someone you will be doing it at your own risk.

The preferred method is to shop online

If you need help with your shopping, you could consider using an online delivery service e.g. through a supermarket etc., Most organisations providing essential supplies are prioritising vulnerable people who are self-isolating. Using such a system means going online to find a supermarket or other store and following instructions on their website. You will need a debit or credit card to pay. The shop will tell you when they will deliver your shopping.

- Ask the delivery people to knock on your door and then leave the items outside.
- Do not let people inside your home.
- Wash your hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds after receiving and handling any deliveries.

Click & Collect Services – you need to check the conditions required to collect the items as some organisations require the card you paid with in order to collect on your behalf.

If you order goods online but use the “collect” service instead of home delivery you can contact a Community Support Organisation (CSO) to ask if a volunteer can collect your goods and deliver them to your house. You will need to tell the volunteer or CSO the date and time it will be ready for collection. If you have paid you will follow the same process for receiving online shopping if not follow the steps as described for cash below.

Unfortunately, because lots of people are using online services at the moment there may be a delay in securing a delivery or collection slot. If that is the case our advice to anyone who needs help while they are self-isolating is first of all to ask for help from family, friends and neighbours. You can also look to any trusted local groups, clubs and organisations that you may belong to as many are offering volunteer help.

For anyone who doesn't have that option we're working with 23 community support organisations across the county who are doing an incredible job supporting people in their local areas. Nobody should feel that they are alone.

Our customer service centre can link anyone who needs help with support in their area. Call 01609 780 780. There is also information on the council's website - <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/food-home-delivery-services-and-support-groups> - about local food suppliers and many social media pages such as Facebook and Nextdoor have up to date information about local food deliveries.

Paying an organisation using volunteers

If a local organisation using volunteers is getting your shopping for you then it may still be possible for you to pay the shop directly. Some local shops will take an order over the phone which you can pay for by debit or credit card over the phone. Other shops may take cheques which you can post or which a volunteer can collect from you. In this case the volunteer would just collect the shopping for you and deliver it to your house – again without entering.

Some shops have started to provide "Volunteer Voucher schemes" which allows self-isolating shoppers to buy a voucher online to give to volunteer to use on their behalf in store. where they will then be able to buy a voucher, ready for use. The customer or their volunteer will then receive a barcode via email that can be used to pay for the shopping. At the moment this is restricted to Asda and Marks and Spencer.

<https://cards.asda.com/volunteer>
<https://www.marksandspencer.com/all-in-this-together/p/p60282075>

If a local shop cannot do this then you might be asked to pay the organisation providing the volunteer to you by either online bank transfer or by cheque. The organisation would then refund the volunteer.

We would encourage you to avoid handing cash to volunteers – for their protection and for yours. If you need to do this you should know when the volunteer is coming to your home, they should have some form of identification and you should know what organisation has sent them. Shops prefer not to take cash if at all possible at the moment.

Payment by Cheque to a volunteer

STEP 1

Make a list of all the items you would like the volunteer to purchase.

The volunteer will do their best to get what you need but may have to substitute alternative brands or food because all items may not be available. If you don't want them to substitute products let the volunteer know.

Volunteers are doing their best to help so please treat them with courtesy.

Inform the volunteer that you plan on paying by cheque and the volunteer will provide the payee name which will be a community support organisation unless you have

made a separate arrangement with someone you know. You can then prepare the cheque.

STEP 2

- Once the volunteer returns with your shopping, they will ring your door bell and place your shopping as close to the door as possible together with the receipt.
- The volunteer will always remain 2 metres away.
- Check the value of the goods on the receipt and put this amount on the cheque. Try to avoid issuing blank cheques.
- Put the cheque and the receipt, perhaps under a stone or heavy object so you don't have to pass it directly to them.
- Please wash your hands after putting your shopping away and try to avoid touching your face during this period.

Payment by Cash to a volunteer

Once you have had confirmation that a volunteer will be assisting you, please follow the steps below.

STEP 1

- Make a list of all the items you would like the volunteer to purchase. Please note that all items may not be available.
- Tell the volunteer if there are any particular brands you require or if you are happy for them to purchase an alternative brand if your preferred brand is out of stock, Inform the volunteer that you plan on using cash to pay for the goods.

STEP 2

- Once the volunteer returns with your shopping, they will ring your door bell and place your shopping as close to the door as possible together with the receipt.
- The volunteer will always remain 2 metres away.
- Check the value of the goods on the receipt and place the cash ready for collection
- Please wash your hands after putting your shopping away and try to avoid touching your face until you have done this.

Making Alternative Payments

Below are alternative ways in which you may consider paying for your shopping.

Online Payments:

For online payments you will need to use your bank card or credit card but there are other payment mechanisms you might consider if you need assistance from others to collect or purchase items on your behalf. The guidance above remains the same whether it be cash or card.

Digital Cards

Obtaining a digital Card – These cards can make purchases online and in shops like a normal debit or credit card. You simply top up the card with the amount of money you want to spend. Links for prepaid card websites can be found below:

Starling - <https://www.starlingbank.com/open-bank-account-online/>

Monzo - <https://monzo.com/blog/how-to-open-a-monzo-account>

Revolut - <https://www.revolut.com/help/getting-started/getting-a-card/getting-a-virtual-card/ordering-a-disposable-virtual-card>

Limit the amount on the digital card – for example with a digital card, only top it up with the amount you actually need to be spent.

Online transfer

If you have online banking set up, or a paypal account you can transfer the money you want to spend to the person or to the support organisation who will purchase the shopping on your behalf so there is a record of the transaction.

Situations where you do not have either a bank account, cheques or cash or where you are struggling financially

There may be circumstances where you have no disposable cash at hand and are not in possession of a credit/debit card or cheque book. On these occasions the following assistance is available.

- Contact the council's customer services on 01609 780780 and explain your situation.
- You will be linked to your local community support organisation who will contact you.
- You may qualify for financial support from our Covid-19 Support Scheme which can issue food vouchers to volunteers.
- A volunteer will be allocated to you and they will contact you via the telephone to check whether you qualify for the food vouchers scheme and if so will make a list of which goods you require and your preferred supermarket.
- The volunteer will purchase these items on your behalf and deliver them to you.
- If you don't qualify for the voucher scheme they will deliver the shopping to you following the safe process for delivery outlined above and will write your details on the top of the receipt and take a photo of this.
- The photo of the receipt will be processed by NYCC who will invoice you for the outstanding balance at a later date with instructions of how the invoice can be paid.

Support with prescriptions

Should you require assistance with collecting a prescription due to being in isolation, find out if your pharmacy can deliver. If not a volunteer can help you with this. Please follow the guidance below:

MAKING ARRANGMENTS FOR COLLECTION

Once you have asked for help, a volunteer will call you to confirm that they are going to collect your prescription and they will require the following information:

- The name of your GP surgery/pharmacy.

- Whether you pay for your prescriptions – if you do please refer to the **making payment guidance** above.
- Some personal details, such as your full name and address and possible date of birth.
- The volunteer will inform you of what time they are going to collect and drop off the prescription.
- They will only be able to leave the prescription at the doorstep so please be available to come to the door to collect it. If you do not come to the door the volunteer will not leave the item(s).

IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Volunteers will respect your privacy at all times. We expect a high level of confidentiality from our volunteers. However, there has been less time to train volunteers than we would usually take.
- Some medication may need to be stored in the fridge, so check the label for storage instructions.
- Any prescriptions that cannot be delivered will be returned to the pharmacy.
- The volunteer is not responsible for giving you guidance about taking or storing your medication. This is your responsibility. If you have a question about the medication, please contact the pharmacy.

TAKING DELIVERY OF THE PRESCRIPTION ITEMS

- Once the volunteer returns with your prescription, they will ring your door bell and place your prescription as close to the door as possible together with the receipt and any change (if applicable).
- They will always remain 2 metres away.
- If you do not come to door in a reasonable time (maximum 5 minutes) the volunteer will return the prescription to the pharmacy.