

Coronavirus in Rochester: How you can help, in all different ways

How you can help with Coronavirus in Rochester

If you can write an email, you can help. If you can make a phone call, you could save a life.

With so much need, there are all sorts of ways to make a difference — whether you're ready to go out and volunteer or would rather stay home and offer help.

We've gathered some things you can do — even some your kids can help with in their free time. And if you know of a way to help, send an email with the subject line COVID Rochester Ways to Help to tspringer@gannett.com.

Make vital phone calls

Hotline calls: Monroe County's coronavirus hotline is, understandably inundated. Medical and nonmedical **volunteers are needed to return calls** to people who didn't leave enough information when leaving a message or who have a question that can be answered using a script that will be provided to volunteers. In some cases, this could involve explaining to people how likely they are to be at risk, or calling people under quarantine to log their daily temperatures. **Time commitment:** at least 10 hours a week for the next two or three months. **To inquire:** send an email to aaroncignarale@monroecounty.gov.

Send encouragement

Help patients and workers: Imagine being hospitalized but unable to see your loved ones because a face-to-face meeting could mean infection with COVID-19. And imagine the stress on health care workers on the front lines, risking their own health to help others.

Rochester Regional Health is asking for **volunteers to share uplifting photo and video messages** with patients who can no longer have visitors, and health care teams who could use encouragement. Kids can help in creating these messages.

If you use social media, you can post videos and photos with the hashtag #RRHspreadjoy, and Rochester Regional will share your messages of inspiration to people who need it most. You can also send emails of thanks and encouragement to: rrhfoundation@rochesterregional.org.

Items and outreach for elders

Lifespan needs **donations of personal care items** (toilet paper, paper towels and cleaning/sanitizing items). The organization, which assists those over 60, is also collecting cards — handmade or store bought — and letters of cheer for residents in nursing homes or adult living facilities who can't see their loved ones. Deliver any of these items to the vestibule of their main office, 1900 S. Clinton Avenue in Tops Brighton Plaza, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays.

Donate items for mothers

For 16 years, Mothers In Need of Others (MINO) has run an emergency assistance program in Rochester. MINO works with nearly 100 agencies and churches who are helping families in need, assisting when their supplies run low. During the pandemic, the group has been helping dozens of families needing emergency aid.

MINO is in need of **baby care items, personal and feminine hygiene products, cleaning supplies and paper products** to provide their clients. If you can donate any of these, send an email to mothersinneedofothers@gmail.com or call (585) 348-8596."

Sew masks to help stop the spread

Hundreds of people who know their way around a needle and thread have been working for the cause. The University of Rochester Medical Center has online instructions for making masks: go to rochester.box.com/v/mask-instructions. You can donate your homemade masks to URM. For safety, it's important to package them in a clean plastic bag, cardboard box or other sealed container, with a label on the outside with your name, the contents and quantity and your email or phone number.

Drop your container off between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Monday through Friday at 40 Celebration Drive, Rochester, using the College Town Courtyard lot; enter through the double-doors with the "Donation" signs on them and place your donation on the table at right upon entering the space. If you have questions or problems, call (585) 275-2420 or email covid19donationsSMH@urmc.rochester.edu.

HCR Home Care, which provides home health services, also needs masks to protect its workers. If you want to volunteer to sew masks, contact Laura Bartolotti, send an email to lbartolotti@hcrhealth.com to receive directions.