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## Advice for Mutual Aid Groups During the COVID-19 Outbreak

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### **Volunteers buying items for others**

During the outbreak, volunteers in mutual aid groups are buying items for other people, for example buying shopping for those who are self-isolating or unable to shop for themselves. Below is some guidance on how volunteers can stay safe and protect others when buying items for people.

### **Do volunteers need to handle money?**

Consider first if volunteers need to purchase items for others, or if there are other options:

- For help with delivery of essentials (for example, food or medicine) for those in Manchester who are vulnerable, over the age of 70, or self-isolating, call Manchester City Council on 0800 234 6123.
- Supermarkets are still offering online delivery, and some are prioritising vulnerable customers. Consider if your group could advise others on doing their own online shopping. Volunteers could also pick up online shopping for others and deliver it safely.
- Check if shops in your local area accept payment over the phone. Volunteers could then safely deliver shopping to those in need.

### **Keeping Safe**

If these options are not suitable, and volunteers do need to handle other people's money, then Macc has come up with some suggestions on the best ways to do this during the COVID-19 outbreak. There is not an a perfect way to do this, but below are some options that could be used.

- The volunteer pays and gets a receipt for the shopping. The volunteer then sends an image of a receipt to the recipient and the recipient transfers the money into the volunteers account.
- A mutual aid group makes the payment using a bank account and the recipient transfers money via a bank transfer. (There are options for groups to set up simple, transparent banking platforms, contact [thomas@macc.org.uk](mailto:thomas@macc.org.uk) to find out more.)
- As a last resort volunteers may need to take cash or a cheque from recipients, which the volunteer can pay for the recipients shopping with. However this increases risk of infection and should be avoided where possible.
- No one should take other people's bank cards and pin numbers.

**This guide was produced 02.04.2020. Remember to always follow the most up to date government and NHS advice about COVID-19.**

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**If you'd like any further advice, contact: [thomas@macc.org.uk](mailto:thomas@macc.org.uk)**