



Home Visitor Coronavirus Policy

Due to the development of the Omicron variant and concerns around rising cases, Home Visits should once again only be carried out virtually.

Where a Home Visitor is uncomfortable with this arrangement, we would reassign to a new Home Visitor.

If a host were uncomfortable with this arrangement we would postpone the Home Visit until we are able to return to face to face visits.

We understand the importance of face to face home visits and will review this policy in January 2022. It is our hope to return to face to face visits as soon as possible.

No pressure should be put on either host or home visitor to undertake a face to face visit while Coronavirus remains a threat in our community.

As part of the Home Visit, key questions about Coronavirus should be asked of the host. These will be explained to you by the placement team or volunteer when you are asked to conduct a home visit, e.g. regarding potential vulnerability etc.

Virtual Home Visits

During a virtual home visit, a host should be able to conduct a virtual tour of the house - the areas that a guest would use. The Home Visitor should be available via video call to answer questions as would normally happen on a home visit. Skype, What'sApp or Facetime all have video functions. This might mean that the visit takes a little longer than normal. Trying to have hosting related conversations over video call may not always allow for the body language or silences to be interpreted well, so we are asking home visitors to give hosts that extra bit of support during this virtual home visit to make sure that everything is covered. We will still need a written home visit report and references to be taken up before we can place guests with any new hosts.

Once we are through this crisis, we would expect Home Visitors and Hosts to meet as normal, although at that point a full home visit will not be needed.

Postponing Home Visits

For those unable to take part in a virtual home visit, we are asking that visits be postponed until they feel comfortable with a face to face visit and, for anyone showing signs of Coronavirus (host or HV), that the visit should be rescheduled. Where there are different opinions on which type of visit should take place, we will be guided by what the host is most comfortable with and reassign the home visitor if possible. However due to a shortage in home visitors, particularly in London this cannot be guaranteed.

For hosts with specific concerns about Coronavirus, we are taking the necessary precautions and asking, as standard, that our referrers have the appropriate conversations with guests about symptoms and preventative measures (using an interpreter if necessary).

Ending placements

We are also explaining to hosts that should they host and either they or their guest develop symptoms, our recommendation is that they all self isolate together. If a host does not want to do this and is adamant that the guest should leave, we will unfortunately not be able to offer a further placement during the period in which the guest should be in self isolation.

Hosts are likely to feel anxious about hosting and may need some extra support - this includes hosts who you, as Home Visitor, have already met.

Please read our Coronavirus policy at <https://www.refugeesathome.org/coronavirus-policy/>

If you have any questions about this new policy, or the steps we are taking please contact info@refugeesathome.org