

SIKH ASSEMBLY GUIDANCE FOR THOSE SERVING FOOD FROM VEHICLES OR STATIC SERVING STATIONS

Waheguru Ji ka Khalsa, Waheguru ji ki Fateh

Sikh Assembly has produced this document to help address the concerns of Sikh volunteers who are engaged in serving hot meals and other food to the less fortunate and underprivileged. Limits and restrictions upon the movement or gathering of individuals and groups introduced by the Government in response to the Coronavirus, COVID-19, has left people unaware and uncertain of their legal right to continue helping those in need. These guidelines have been drawn up following consultation with various Sikh professional and volunteer bodies, including advice from both NHS England and Public Health England and are intended for existing organised Langar and food distribution Seva. All voluntary teams should make efforts to comply and understand food health and hygiene regulations (food preparation, storage, temperature management etc.), licensing and requisite liability insurance.

This guide is presented with a view to help introduce standardisation of the process and protocols governing meal and food distribution away from traditional buildings and essentially on the street.

Personal Safety & Risk

We understand and appreciate your Seva is of vital importance to the end user and has been helping sustain many individuals and families during this COVID -19 Pandemic.

The current Government and Public Health England advice is to have isolation of individuals and the association of 2 or more people not sharing living spaces is advised only with a 2-metre area of social distancing between people. Therefore, it is essential that teams are constituted of absolute minimum number of Sevadars required to carry out their Seva.

By engaging in the distribution of Langar, street distribution and home delivery services, often to strangers, it is inherently understood that you increase your risk of being exposed to the Coronavirus.

The advice of Government is changing constantly, therefore we urge you to regularly check for the latest guidelines. We encourage you to utilise resources like the [NHS website](https://www.nhs.uk), which shall help inform your decisions about what is appropriate or expected of you for your personal circumstances and those of your family.

If you are a key essential worker, please consider how your decision to participate in this voluntary service may impact on your other roles and duties.

Food Distribution & Delivery

Before you engage in street or delivered food distribution, please ensure you have or are provided with a **suitable antibacterial hand sanitiser, disposable gloves and a face mask.**

- While serving food, be mindful of yourself and those around you:
 - do not cough or sneeze on the food, uncovered beverages or other people
 - cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin.
 - **See it, Catch it, Bin it, Kill it**
- **Maintain a 2-metre distance** from the people you are serving. This is best achieved by remaining on the opposite side of any serving counter or table and where possible maintain distance between other servers.
- It is important that you **do not enter homes**, as this increases the risk of spreading Coronavirus.
- Only one volunteer should approach the door and it is advised **to leave food parcels at the doorstep.**
- **Do not shake hands or hug** during street distribution of food and maintain some social distancing between server and recipient.
- There should be at least one individual designated the duty **of continuously disinfecting surfaces**, particularly the tabletops and frequently touched objects.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands at all times.

Vehicle & Personal Hygiene

- **Before use, vehicles should be hygienically cleaned** - using anti-bacterial wipes, sprays and wearing gloves at all times.
- We encourage all to use plastic sheeting as disposable single use seat coverings to be disposed of after each food distribution event.
- It is advised that where 2 people are traveling in the same car, **one volunteer should sit in the rear nearside seat.**
- **After use make sure the vehicle is clean and tidy** – taking particular care in cleaning the gear stick, steering wheel, all door handles and ensuring indicator stalks are wiped with fresh anti-bacterial wipes.

Potential Infection Response

The Team Leader is responsible for ensuring the above points are followed and maintained.

We strongly advise all team leaders to select Sevadars who are **healthy individuals that have undergone a period of self-isolation.**

If any team member feels unwell during any outreach service, **immediately leave the service area and inform your Team Leader.**

If you suspect an individual could be suffering COVID-19; Inform the Team leader immediately.

Do not go directly to your GP or alternative healthcare centres and facilities.

Avoid direct contact with people (maintain a minimum 2 metres of distance)

Do your best to self-isolate or help with the consent of the affected colleague to isolate them away from others. Once isolation is achieved:

- For urgent medical help, use the [NHS online service](#)
- Only call 111 if you're unable to get help online
- For life-threatening emergencies, call 999 for an ambulance

By following these guidelines, we can continue to serve humanity and reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 to ourselves and others.

These sensible and practical precautions will enable us all to pay homage and respect to our Guru's Hukkam of **Kirat Karo, Vand Shako and Naam Japo**, at this time of universal human suffering, by delivering succour and much needed humanitarian service to those who need it most amidst this global crisis.

Paramjit Kaur Matharu
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