

HELLO Project Phone Guidelines

Dear HELLO Project phone volunteer:

During these challenging times it is inspiring that so many are joining together to support their neighbors. Thank you for offering your time and kindness to act as a HELLO volunteer. The older adult that you will call has requested a friendly call and may be at risk of isolation.

Here are some guidelines to ensure that you and your Telefriend (person you are calling) are comfortable with the call and get the most out of the call for you both.

Guidelines for Communication with Telefriend

Your telefriend's contact information and any personal information they may share is confidential and should not be shared.

Introduce yourself and let them know you are calling as a Project HELLO volunteer and that you were given their name as someone who would like to get a call. They will have been provided with your name and, with your permission, the phone number from which you will be calling.

Try to put the telefriend in charge of the conversation.

- Ask them about their day
- Ask them what they want to talk about
- Try to reflect upon light topics for discussion
- You both will benefit from the call

We are asking you to call two persons, two times a week and determine what time of day and day of week works best for you both. We also ask you to keep track of how many telefriends you call and how many calls you make per week

Cultural awareness

This may mean that your telefriend may differ in many respects from you. Resist the temptation to educate. Draw on warmth, genuineness, and empathy to make this connection as a friendly caller during a time when many of us may be feeling alone.

Suspected abuse or self-neglect

Rhode Island requires you to report elder abuse or exploitation. All Rhode Islanders are mandatory reporters. If you suspect abuse, exploitation, or neglect contact our Elder Rights and Safety Unit at 401-462-0555. If you have questions about what that means, or looks like, check out our website

<http://www.oha.ri.gov/what-we-do/protect/protective-services/> .

Potential Topics of Conversation

Favorite recipes, hobbies and interests, what you look forward to getting back to, pets, games, music, etc.

We hope this list is helpful as you engage in your conversations.

If your Telefriend has questions or needs they share with you, please refer them to: **THE POINT @ 462-4444** for assistance. Also, the attached sheet has local contact numbers which you may share and Tips for staying safe during this time.

For more information on potential resources:

http://www.oha.ri.gov/documents/COVID19_Senior%20Resources_One%20Pager.pdf