

JFS Friendly Visiting Program Guidelines and Tips

Thank you for stepping up in support of our local Jewish community! The contribution of your time and talent is very much appreciated by JFS staff and our clients! JFS Volunteers are pivotal in the process of communicating regularly with isolated individuals in our area. Especially now, it is so important to continue reaching out to our more vulnerable community!

Guidelines: To ensure the safety and privacy of our clients and volunteers:

- ▶ Schedule visits with your client(s) the same time each week, whenever possible.
- ▶ Consistency is especially important for isolated individuals.
- ▶ Make your calls in a private location to limit distraction (when applicable).
- ▶ You are visiting as a volunteer, not visiting to provide a professional resource like therapy, medical, or legal advice.
- ▶ Familiarize yourself with the ‘how to’s’ of redirecting the client should they begin to divulge information meant for a social worker.

Client confidentiality is a requirement when volunteering with JFS. Only share client information with the Volunteer Coordinator or another JFS Staff Member.

This also provides a sense of security for the client as they understand that their information will not be shared outside of Jewish Family Services.

Visit the [JFS Website](#) and hover over the “Services” tab at the top of the page to see what services JFS offers. JFS does NOT provide emergency/crisis services.

Those you visit may be extremely isolated and you may find that some uncomfortable topics may come up, or issues that are beyond your expertise. If this happens, here are a few tips to keep you on track:

- ▶ Remember, you are NOT their counselor, lawyer, or therapist. You are calling community members as a volunteer.
- ▶ Clients may be experiencing more stress and isolation during this time and may simply want to vent their frustrations. *Listen* to them. Sometimes, that’s all they need!
- ▶ Your role as a FV volunteer is to *empower*, and *encourage* the client to take steps to receive help.

JFS Friendly Visiting Program Guidelines and Tips

WHAT CAN YOU DO/SAY?

- ▶ If the community member begins to mention problems that need intervention from a professional, you can respond with:
 - I'm hearing that you are having a tough time right now. Is there anything specific you feel that JFS could help you with?
 - It seems like you've got a lot going on right now. Is there anything specific you feel that JFS could help you with?
 - If the answer is yes, *encourage* the client to call JFS! Your role is NOT to solve or fix their problems but to *empower* them to take action!

JFS Direct Line: 919-676-2295

RED FLAGS

- ▶ If you feel at any time concerned about the client you are visiting, contact the JFS Volunteer Coordinator ASAP.
 - If the client mentions the following:
 - Not enough food or a need for personal hygiene items or medication
 - Utilities will be shut off/Unable to pay rent etc.
 - Calls from unknown Charities or individuals asking for money or personal information
- ▶ If there is an immediate safety concern or emergency, **CALL 911**, direct the client to do the same if possible, and follow up ASAP with the JFS Volunteer Coordinator.
 - Slurred Speech
 - Signs of paranoia ("people are chasing me", "I'm hearing voices")
 - Mentions wanting to hurt themselves or others

A FEW MORE THINGS TO REMEMBER:

- JFS Volunteers are asked not to share their personal phone numbers. Direct the client to contact JFS directly for any requests for additional support. (JFS: 919-676-2295 or on our website via the [Request Services](#) button).