



Support for families in the UK

Defence Community Organisation

There is a range of support and information for Australian Defence Force (ADF) and Australian Public Service (APS) families affected by the COVID-19 outbreak in the United Kingdom.

Families can access support through Defence Community Organisation and local government and non-government organisations.

DEFENCE FAMILY HELPLINE

The Helpline is available 24/7 and is staffed by qualified human services professionals, including social workers and psychologists, who can provide you with a range of support.

Call 0800 051 2187 from the UK. This is a free call from a UK landline, but if you are calling from a mobile, ask the Helpline to call you back. Alternatively, call +61 2 6127 1600 (not a free call) or email defencefamilyhelpline@defence.gov.au.

APS EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

The APS EAP is available 24/7 and provides professional counselling for APS employees and their immediate families.

1300 687 327 (within Australia)
+61 3 8620 5300 (international)

CONSULAR ASSISTANCE

For consular assistance while in the UK, contact the Australian High Commission Consular office, 9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday.

020 7887 5776
consular.lh1h@dfat.gov.au

After hours, or from overseas, call the Consular Emergency Centre.

+61 2 6261 3305 (24/7).

OPEN ARMS

Open Arms provides individual, couple and family counselling to Defence members and their families, as well as online resources and self-help tools.

+61 1800 011 046 or +61 2 8566 6920 (calling from overseas may incur a cost to the caller)

www.openarms.gov.au

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT IN THE UK

- The **UK Government webpage** provides information on testing and restriction requirements. It also has guidelines for forming a social bubble, where single adults living alone or single parents whose children are under 18 form a support bubble with one other household, or a childcare bubble to provide or receive childcare from one other household if you live with someone under the age of 14.
<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
- **NHS UK** has the latest health information, advice and resources about coronavirus. Call the NHS 111 service for advice and



support over the phone in England, Scotland and some parts of Wales.

[nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19)

- **NHS 111 online** is an online service that can be used to check if you have coronavirus symptoms and advise you of your next steps. It includes information on getting an 'isolation note' for employers.
www.111.nhs.uk/service/COVID-19
- Your General Practitioner (GP) can help with your mental as well as physical health. Talking to them is often the first step towards finding treatment and support that may help. If you don't have a GP, the NHS guide on registering with a GP may help.
www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/gps/

COMMUNITY SUPPORT IN THE UK

- **Childline** is a phone and web counselling service for children and young people up to their 19th birthday, available from 7.30am to 3.30 am, Monday to Friday; 9am to 3.30am on weekends.

0800 11 11

www.childline.org.uk

- **MIND UK** has a coronavirus information hub to provide advice on supporting your mental wellbeing. It includes practical advice on coping with staying at home, tips for parents on supporting themselves and their family, student mental health and coronavirus useful contacts.

www.mind.org.uk

- **SHOUT** is a text message support service for people in crisis.

85258 (text SHOUT)

www.giveusashout.org

- **Samaritans** is available 24/7 for anyone who needs to talk.

116 123 (free call)

www.samaritans.org

- **YoungMinds** is a helpline offering advice to parents and carers worried about a child or young person under 25.

0808 802 5544

www.youngminds.org.uk

EDUCATION SUPPORT

- **BBC Bitesize** provides learning and revision support for primary, secondary and post-16 groups with new lessons added daily.
www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize
- **Twinkl** is free online resource hub of study materials and resources for young people with special educational needs.
www.twinkl.co.uk
- **Future Learn** has free online courses on a range of subjects for older students.
www.futurelearn.com
- **PE with Joe** keeps kids active during school closures. The 20-minute sessions are streamed live at 9am three days a week and do not require special equipment.
thebodycoach.com/blog/pe-with-joe

VOLUNTEERING IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Volunteering can give you a sense of purpose and companionship during the COVID crisis, as well as the opportunity to gain skills.

- **Royal Voluntary Service** is encouraging the public to volunteer for at least an hour per week with the 'Hour of need' campaign to support vulnerable people and families during the colder months.
royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/hour-of-need
- **NHS Volunteer Responders** needs Steward Volunteers to help at the pop-up vaccination centres across the UK.
www.nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk

Defence Community Organisation offers a wide range of support services to ADF members and their families.

For more information on this factsheet and other Defence Community Organisation support services visit www.defence.gov.au/dco or call the all-hours Defence Family Helpline on 1800 624 608.

