

Mutual Aid Medford And Somerville (MAMAS)

Neighborhood Pods How-To

As things get harder, we show up for our neighbors. As a neighborhood point person, you'd take on the responsibility of reaching out to your neighbors, checking in on what needs are arising on your block, coordinating a neighborhood group chat or phone tree, and staying in touch with the point people from other neighborhoods for resource pooling. We are trying to build a network of many neighborhood pods across Medford and Somerville.

This document includes:

- [How to start and build your pod](#)
- [Neighborhood flyer template](#)
- [Pod Starter Conversation guide](#)
- [Community Resource List](#)

How to build your pod

- [Fill out the survey](#) to volunteer as a neighborhood point person (NPP)
- **Starting your pod:**
 - [Read this zine on safe distribution](#) before starting.
 - Print (or write out!) copies of the following [contact sheet](#) and deliver to your neighbors. You might deliver 30+ fliers to the houses/apartments right around where you live. Knock, talk through the flyer with them, and if they aren't home, leave a flyer.
 - *It is illegal to put things in other people's mailboxes: try the crack of their door, between screen door and main door, etc.*
 - *safety advice: leave off your house number*
 - The flyers are to exchange contact info, in order to start a text thread (or whatsapp, signal, slack, facebook messenger, whatever!) or a phone tree.
- **Naming your pod:** Pick a fun name! My dad's pod is "the Peralta Street Blockheads"
- **Building your pod:**
 - Create a group chat for your neighborhood and as people text you, add them to the group. We recommend WhatsApp but whatever works for you all.
 - Troubleshoot as needed - helping folks download whatsapp and get set up if they need it, answering questions, and asking neighbors to help bring more people in.
 - Neighborhood Pods should be between 5 and 30 or so, if there are more than 30 neighbors interested, figure out how to split up into two pods.
 - Stay in touch with folks. Use the [conversation guide](#) below to get a sense of what support needs may come up in your pod. Share [wider-community resources](#).
- **Connecting to other pods:**
 - Join the Neighborhood Point People whatsapp group chat to connect with other pods. You may want to ask for resources that your pod doesn't have, ask for advice, share successes, or offer ideas to others.

Hey! My name is _____
and I am your neighbor at the address
_____ and
my number is _____.

I'm reaching out because I know that Coronavirus is spreading in our area, and I want to be connected with you and our other neighbors so we can stay in touch, pool resources, and support each other with any needs that may come up. I am going to coordinate a group text message thread or phone tree so we can be in communication. Please text me when you get this if you would like to be part of this network. If you prefer not to communicate via text, give me a call and we can talk that way!

Hey! My name is _____
and I am your neighbor at the address
_____ and
my number is _____.

I'm reaching out because I know that Coronavirus is spreading in our area, and I want to be connected with you and our other neighbors so we can stay in touch, pool resources, and support each other with any needs that may come up. I am going to coordinate a group text message thread or phone tree so we can be in communication. Please text me when you get this if you would like to be part of this network. If you prefer not to communicate via text, give me a call and we can talk that way!

Hey! My name is _____
and I am your neighbor at the address
_____ and
my number is _____.

I'm reaching out because I know that Coronavirus is spreading in our area, and I want to be connected with you and our other neighbors so we can stay in touch, pool resources, and support each other with any needs that may come up. I am going to coordinate a group text message thread or phone tree so we can be in communication. Please text me when you get this if you would like to be part of this network. If you prefer not to communicate via text, give me a call and we can talk that way!

Hey! My name is _____
and I am your neighbor at the address
_____ and
my number is _____.

I'm reaching out because I know that Coronavirus is spreading in our area, and I want to be connected with you and our other neighbors so we can stay in touch, pool resources, and support each other with any needs that may come up. I am going to coordinate a group text message thread or phone tree so we can be in communication. Please text me when you get this if you would like to be part of this network. If you prefer not to communicate via text, give me a call and we can talk that way!

Pod Conversation Guide

This can be a conversation or you can take notes, compiling a little neighborhood directory with emergency contacts for people. ****We encourage that you have this conversation over the phone once you have exchanged info rather than in person to minimize disease spread****

1. Hi neighbor! We may know each other well -- or we may be meeting for the first time. If this is the first time: tell me a little about your life! What is your living situation like? Do you have pets? What are your days like? Do you have any particular skills or hobbies?
2. What are you concerned about right now in regard to COVID-19? Your health or your family's? Losing work or childcare? Being confined to your home? What do you think this may mean for you?
3. Who are the main people in your life who you contact about your well-being? How do you contact them (by phone, on facebook), and would you be open to sharing their contact info with me in case of emergency? Who else lives with you, and how can we best contact them if need be?
4. What resources, skills, interests, knowledge do you hold that you would be open to sharing with the block?
5. What do you think is important to share with me and others about your health? Dietary restrictions? Where do you pick up prescriptions? Which clinic do you go to?

Resources to share with your pod

- City websites and alert systems:
 - Medford:
 - [Coronavirus Website](#)
 - Somerville:
 - [Coronavirus Website](#)
 - [Sign up for city alerts](#)
- Hotlines:
 - **The Network/La Red** is a survivor led organization working towards ending partner abuse in LGBTQ/T, poly, and kink communities. They have a 24/7 hotline, a remote telephone based support group for LGBTQ/T survivors of partner abuse, and other services which are listed on [our website](#), hotline number: 617-742-4911
 - *La línea de crisis de 24 horas de The Network/La Red proporciona apoyo emocional, información y planificaciones de seguridad para la gente lesbiana, gay, bisexual, queer y/o transgénera (LGBTQ/T), y también para*

la gente en las comunidades SM/kink y poliamorosas que está siendo abusada o ha sido abusada por una pareja. Numero: 617-742-4911

- **Jewish Coalition Against Domestic Violence** has a hotline to support safety planning with people who may be quarantined with their abuser. Please let people know that our helpline is available during business hours for just this purpose! 877-88-JCADA

- Boston [Resources](#)
 - [TONS More!](#) Very helpful

- More coming, email mutualaidmamas@gmail.com if you have resources that we should add!