



# COVID-19

## GUIDANCE NOTE

GUIDANCE NOTE 40

1 October 2021

### ACT Covid-19 Pathway Forward

The ACT Covid-19 Pathway Forward presented by the ACT Government on 28 September 2021, has enabled the Synod to now advise the process of returning to face-to-face worship. Please note that this guidance has been based on information available as at 30 September 2021, and is subject to change.

It is acknowledged that this advice does not fully cover all the varied aspects of a Congregation's normal life. Further advice will be shared with you as it becomes available. The following table summarises the path for the coming months noting key restrictions.

	From 1st Oct *	From 15th Oct *	From 29th Oct *	End Nov-early Dec
<b>Worship</b>	Closed	Open, subject to 1 person per 4sqm, capped at 25	Indoors, 1 person per 4sqm capped at 100. Outdoors, 1 person per 2sqm, capped at 150 (excluding staff)	Yet to be determined. Will be considered in light of current situation.
<b>Child and Youth related groups and activities</b>	No specific advice has been given. This would be grouped in the Worship advice	No specific advice has been given. This would be grouped in the Worship advice	No specific advice has been given. This would be grouped in the Worship advice	Yet to be advised.
<b>Weddings</b>	No more than 10 attendees (excluding the celebrant and one photographer, but includes persons being married and two witnesses).	Permitted, subject to 1 person per 4sqm, capped at 25. Remain seated while eating and drinking. Dancing permitted	Indoors, subject to 1 person per 4sqm, capped at 100 (density limit does not apply up to 25 persons). Outdoors, subject to 1 person per 2sqm, capped at 150. Staff are excluded. Remain seated while eating and drinking. Dancing permitted	Yet to be determined. Will be considered in light of current situation.
<b>Funerals</b>	No more than 20 people (excludes persons necessary to conduct the funeral)	Up to 50 people or 1 per 4 sqm across the venue, whichever is less (indoors and outdoors)	Indoors, subject to 1 person per 4sqm, capped at 100 (density limit does not apply up to 25 persons). Outdoors, subject to 1 person per 2sqm, capped at 150. Staff are excluded. Remain seated while eating and drinking.	Yet to be determined. Will be considered in light of current situation.

#### PRESBYTERIES



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	From 1st Oct *	From 15th Oct *	From 29th Oct *	End Nov-early Dec
<b>Outdoor gatherings</b>	Up to 5 people or one household (any size) can gather outdoors for up to 4 hours for physical or recreational activities (no organised events)	Up to 25 people can gather outdoors (no organised events)	Up to 30 people can gather outdoors (some organised events can be held - refer to <a href="#">ACT Government website</a> for details)	Yet to be determined. Will be considered in light of current situation.
<b>Household visits</b>	Up to 2 people permitted to visit another household at any time. Stay at Home except for approved reasons outlined in the Public Health Direction	Up to 5 people permitted to visit another household at any time	Up to 10 people permitted to visit another household at any time	Yet to be determined. Will be considered in light of current situation.
<b>Non-essential Retail (Op-shops) *</b>	Closed.	Closed.	Open with density limits of 1 per 4 sqm for areas accessible to the public	Yet to be determined. Will be considered in light of current situation.
<b>Third party hire - Dance classes *</b>	Not permitted	Not permitted	Up to 20 people in each class or 1 per 4 sqm(excluding staff). 1 parent permitted per minor.	Yet to be determined. Will be considered in light of current situation.
<b>Third party hire - Choirs, bands &amp; orchestras</b>	Not permitted	Not permitted	20 people per choir, band, orchestra (excluding conductor, instructor, accompanists) or 1 per 4 sqm, whichever is less	Yet to be determined. Will be considered in light of current situation.
<b>Face masks</b>	Required indoor and outdoor	Required indoor and outdoor	Required indoors	Required indoors
<b>Attendance recording</b>	Check In CBR App must be used	Check In CBR App must be used	Check In CBR App must be used	Check In CBR App must be used

**\*Clarifications and assumptions**

**Retail (Op-shops)** - this is based on op-shops not being classed as essential services.

**Third party hire: dance classes** - we see this as including similar groups like yoga and other less strenuous groups

**Dates** - current as of 29th September, and subject to change

**PRESBYTERIES**

CANBERRA REGION | FAR NORTH COAST | GEORGES RIVER | ILLAWARRA | KOREAN | MACQUARIE DARLING | MID NORTH COAST | NEW ENGLAND NORTH WEST | PARRAMATTA NEPEAN | RIVERINA | SYDNEY CENTRAL COAST | SYDNEY | THE HUNTER | UAICC



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For the sake of 2 weeks (at this stage), waiting until the 29 October to resume worship is strongly recommended. Each Church Council will need to decide whether they wish to regather as from 15 October and plan accordingly to manage the additional safety and compliance issues.

Synod would also recommend congregations not serve morning tea or refreshments until government provides further advice in late November or early December, and subject to their Covid plan.

Congregations may also consider waiting until early next year to resume face-to-face worship. Some issues around vaccinations and the higher Covid numbers expected after we begin to move around more freely may be resolved.

The Synod advises caution in the careful planning that needs to be done, as the priority continues to be the safety and wellbeing of all people.

**Covid-19 Safety Plans** will need to be updated prior to a Congregation returning to worship. Once completed and approved by Church Council, please forward to [Covid19@nswact.uca.org.au](mailto:Covid19@nswact.uca.org.au) and/or to your Presbytery as per your current practice. Advice on specific safety measures is available on the [Synod Website](#) or the [ACT Guidelines for your COVID Safety Plan](#).

The information in this document has been sourced from the following ACT Government websites. Please refer to them for further details:

- <https://www.covid19.act.gov.au>
- [https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/1554199/PICC0016-COVID-safety-plan\\_v8.pdf](https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1554199/PICC0016-COVID-safety-plan_v8.pdf)
- <https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/act-status-and-response/the-acts-pathway-forward>

If you have any queries, please contact: [covid19@nswact.uca.org.au](mailto:covid19@nswact.uca.org.au) or Kingsley Murphy: [kingsleym@nswact.uca.org.au](mailto:kingsleym@nswact.uca.org.au)

We are a church united by Jesus Christ, called to be people of hope as we share God's Good News with the world. Whether we are vaccinated or unvaccinated, whether we meet in person or online, all remain loved and valued. May our differences lead us to greater learning and understanding rather than feed conflict and division.

In this long and challenging time, you have been patient and understanding. You have all adapted to great change during times of personal challenge. Many have found ways of continuing to serve local communities, who have also faced great challenge in the lock down period. We look forward to the coming good news stories as hospitality and welcome is extended.

You are an inspiration.

Please know we will be praying for you as you work through your plans.

May the LORD bless you and keep you;  
the LORD make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you;  
the LORD lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace. Numbers 6:25-26

Regards and blessings,

Rev. Bronwyn Murphy  
Associate Secretary

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