



# COVID-19

## GUIDANCE NOTE

5.8.2020

### Update from NSW Premier

The NSW Government has announced that COVID-19 restrictions will tighten. Given the restrictions and curfew people of Victoria are facing reminds us the second wave is a real and very present threat to the health and well-being of people in NSW and the ACT.

Please pray for the people of Victoria, in particular in Melbourne as they face difficult weeks to come.

The Chief Health officer, Dr. Kerry Chant recently wrote to religious leaders highlighting the high risk face to face gatherings pose for further outbreaks.

<https://nswact.uca.org.au/communications/newsroom/chief-health-officer-urges-church-leaders-to-be-vigilant/>.

In reminding us that 'no border is impenetrable', the Premier of NSW has said 'I cannot stress how critical the next few weeks are.'

The Premier of NSW stressed that while these recommendations are not compulsory, they are made to keep people safe and minimise the risk of further outbreaks. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-08-02/nsw-sunday-coronavirus-update-masks-recommended/12516026>

As a result, the Synod of NSW-ACT strongly recommends that:

- All congregations in NSW and ACT refrain from face to face gatherings at this time. Services should continue to be streamed or recorded to enable people to engage in worship.
- This includes Youth Groups, Kids clubs, Sunday Schools and other missional and social groups.
- Should any congregation or group elect to gather face to face, every participant should wear a face mask.
- No singing of any kind. This includes community, congregational or choir led singing. No singing applies even if people wear a mask.
- Baptisms to be postponed wherever possible.
- Third party hires and op shops remain under the oversight of the church council. In line with the Premier's recommendation, every attention should be given to ensure masks are worn (where physical distancing is hard to maintain and in settings where there is a high risk of transmission) and strict hygiene followed.

### 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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The Synod of NSW-ACT asks that all congregations who continue to gather face to face remember the existing government and territory directives:

- People attending worship cannot exceed 100, subject to the 4 square metre rule.
- All attendees must provide their name and contact details to enable contact tracing.
- All churches engaging in any form of face to face gathering must have a Covid-19 Safe Plan and register as a Covid-Safe venue.
- People attending a wedding in a church building cannot exceed 100, subject to the 4 square metre rule. All attendees must provide their name and contact details to enable contact tracing.
- People attending a funeral or memorial service in a church building cannot exceed 100, subject to the 4 square metre rule. All attendees must provide their name and contact details to enable contact tracing.
- Those gatherings which are not classed as essential or involve physical activity should review their Covid safe plan to reflect the recent recommendations of the Premier.

We encourage people to stay home if unwell and get tested, maintain 1.5-metre social distancing and practise good hand hygiene. If people have symptoms they should immediately be tested and self-isolate.

It is vital that each of us do what we can to protect the people in our care and communities. Please pray for one another as we look forward to the day when we will be together again – healthy and safe.

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