

COVID-19

GUIDANCE NOTE

24 December 2020

Covid-19 Restrictions for the Christmas Period

Restrictions for Northern Beaches (Peninsula Zone) residents, businesses and visitors

Restrictions apply to the Northern Beaches (Peninsula Zone), with stay at home orders in place. For the period 24, 25 and 26 December 2020:

- There is a new reason for leaving home, that is, to visit the home of others who live within this zone.
- **Up to 5 visitors** (total, including children) will be allowed in homes as long as they reside in the peninsula zone.
- People may not enter or leave this zone, unless for the four approved reasons already in place.

On December 27, the region will revert to existing stay at home restrictions.

A list of suburbs included in these restrictions, along with further information on what you can and cannot do, is on the NSW Government website <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/what-you-can-and-cant-do-under-rules/northern-beaches>

There are some specific restrictions to be aware of:

Places of worship are closed except for funeral services of no more than 100 people, including the person conducting the service. (Weddings were allowed up until 20 December 2020.)

A **minister** may leave their place of residence to go to a person's place of worship or to provide pastoral care.

You **must not enter** the Northern Beaches unless you have a reasonable excuse. A reasonable excuse includes to attend a funeral that complies with the *Public Health (COVID-19 Northern Beaches) Order 2020*.

Community halls are closed.

Restrictions for Northern Beaches (Southern Zone) residents, businesses and visitors

Restrictions apply to the Northern Beaches (Southern Zone), with stay at home orders in place. For the period 24, 25 and 26 December 2020:

- There is a new reason for leaving home: to visit the home of others who live within this zone.

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

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THE HUNTER

UAICC

COVID-19

GUIDANCE NOTE

- **Up to 10 visitors** (plus primary school children and younger) will be allowed in homes. This may include people from outside this zone, not including the Northern Beaches peninsula zone.
- People who reside outside the northern beaches are allowed to visit others in this zone.
- Residents of this zone may not leave, unless for the four approved reasons already in place.

Restrictions in this zone will be reassessed following Boxing Day.

A list of suburbs included in these restrictions, along with further information on what you can and cannot do, is on the NSW Government website <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/what-you-can-and-cant-do-under-rules/northern-beaches>

There are some specific restrictions to be aware of:

Places of worship are closed except for funeral services of no more than 100 people, including the person conducting the service. (Weddings were allowed up until 20 December 2020.)

A **minister** may leave their place of residence to go to a person's place of worship or to provide pastoral care.

You **must not enter** the Northern Beaches unless you have a reasonable excuse. A reasonable excuse includes to attend a funeral that complies with the *Public Health (COVID-19 Northern Beaches) Order 2020*.

Community halls are closed.

Restrictions for Greater Sydney, Central Coast, Wollongong and Nepean Blue Mountains

Residents across Greater Sydney, Central Coast, Wollongong and Nepean Blue Mountains should limit unnecessary activity.

Restrictions remain in place:

- Household gatherings will be limited to 10 visitors (for 24, 25 and 26 December 2020, primary school-aged children and younger will be allowed on top of the current 10 visitors cap for homes).
- The one person per four square metre rule will be re-introduced for all indoor settings including **places of worship**.
- A cap of 300 people will apply for **places of worship**, subject to the 4 Square metres rule, and hospitality venues.

PRESBYTERIES

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FAR NORTH COAST

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PARRAMATTA NEPEAN

RIVERINA

SYDNEY CENTRAL COAST

SYDNEY

THE HUNTER

UAICC



COVID-19

GUIDANCE NOTE

- **Singing** and chanting at indoor venues is restricted, returning for indoor venues to:
 - a maximum of 5 performers indoors, provided they are 1.5 metres from one another and
 - performers are at a distance of least 5 metres from the audience, **who are not allowed to sing along.**
- Dancefloors will not be permitted, except for weddings, when a maximum of 20 from the bridal party will be permitted.

The Local Government Areas impacted by these restrictions are listed [here](#).

The amended *Public Health (COVID-19 Restrictions on Gathering and Movement) Order (No 7) 2020* can be seen [here](#).

NSW Health strongly encourages people to wear face masks indoors.

The Synod strongly recommends the congregations consider a return to zoom or live streaming worship and fellowship services at this time.

Restrictions for other areas in NSW and the ACT

Restrictions in other areas remain as previously advised.

There are specific requirements for people returning to the ACT from Northern Beaches, Greater Sydney, Wollongong and Nepean Blue Mountains – please review the ACT directions for requirements for your specific circumstances - <https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/news-articles/reminder-on-directions-for-anyone-arriving-in-the-act-from-greater-sydney>

Specific guidance on singing

Singing carries a high risk due to increased droplet spread.

- On the Northern Beaches (Peninsula and Southern), places of worship are closed.
- For Greater Sydney, Central Coast, Wollongong and Nepean Blue Mountain, singing is restricted to:
 - a maximum of 5 performers indoors, provided they are 1.5 metres from one another, and
 - performers [choir] are at a distance of least 5 metres from the audience, **who are not allowed** to sing along.
- For other NSW areas, in indoors settings up to 50 people may
 - sing together in one area if all singers face forwards and not towards each other
 - have physical distancing of 1.5 metres between each other and any other performers, and

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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



COVID-19

GUIDANCE NOTE

- o 5 metres distancing from all other people in front including the audience and conductor.

NSW Health strongly recommends that audience members and congregants older than 12 years old wear face masks if singing or chanting. Ensembles and other musical groups should rehearse and perform outdoors or in large, well-ventilated indoor spaces.

- For other NSW areas, in outdoors settings there is no limit on the number of people singing together in an outdoors setting. To minimise infection risk:
 - o all singers should face forwards and not towards each other
 - o maintain physical distancing of 1.5 metres between each other and any other performers, and
 - o keep 5 metres distancing from all other people including the audience and conductor.

If the event is one where the audience or congregation are likely to participate in the singing, such as carols by candlelight or religious services, audience members and congregants 12 years or older should wear a face mask. All gatherings for outdoor music rehearsals and performances must have a COVID-19 Safety Plan.

- In the ACT, when singing, congregation/attendees should maintain a minimum of two metres from each other and cleaning of areas or equipment in range of singers/performers should be increased. Minimise the number of choir members at the venue. Choir members must stay at least two metres away from the congregation, those conducting the service/event and, if possible, each other.

It is important to remember that COVID-19 is still circulating in the community, especially when you gather with family and friends over the Christmas period.

Please continue to play your role in controlling the spread, by getting tested if symptoms develop, practising physical distancing and good hand hygiene, and by wearing a mask, particularly indoors.

Please continue to monitor the NSW Government website <https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19> and the ACT Government website <https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/> as the situation is fluid.

For further information, please contact covid19@nswact.uca.org.au

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