



COVID-19

GUIDANCE NOTE

25 February 2021

Further easing of Covid-19 Restrictions

The Premier, Gladys Berejiklian has announced the further easing of restrictions for Churches in NSW.

For Churches in the ACT the restrictions continue as per the website. <https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/what-you-can-do/act-public-health-directions>

For NSW, the changes come into effect from Friday, 26th February 2021.

The key change is that congregations can once again sing together if masks are worn and subject to one person per 4sqm (currently no congregant singing is allowed, with one per 2sqm permitted in places of worship).

Square Metre Rule

Places of public worship/worship services may have either;

- One person per 4 square metres with masks being worn, and singing by the congregation allowed
- One person per 2 square metres without masks being required, and no signing or chanting allowed.

Up to 25 people are allowed before the 2 square metre rule applies. Social distancing still applies.

Maximum capacity

Maximum capacity for worship is determined by the sq m/social distancing rules. Signage for your premises will need to be updated to reflect the new maximum capacities.

No changes to maximum numbers for weddings and funerals have been flagged.

Singing

Singing and chanting rules have been relaxed, so for singers up the front;

- Up to 30 performers can sing indoors as long as physical distancing requirements are met
- all singers face forwards and not towards each other
- there is a space of 1.5 metres between performers
- there is a space of 5 metres between performers and other people including the conductor and the audience.

In indoor areas, audience members and congregants may participate in singing or chanting if the 4 square metre rule is observed and masks are worn.

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



Uniting Church
SYNOD OF NSW & ACT

GUIDANCE NOTE 26

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Masks

While masks are no longer mandatory in services where the 2 square metre rule is applied, they are required if the congregation wishes to sing. The congregation members may remove their masks when not singing.

Masks continue to be recommended where 1.5 metre distancing is difficult, and/or if they are in the vulnerable age group or caring for a vulnerable person (a person whose age or health make them more likely to become acutely unwell if infected).

Safety Plans

All plans will need to be updated to reflect changes applicable to your premises, and your decision to allow congregational singing. The updated plan will need to be approved by your Church Council and will need to be submitted to your Presbytery and to Synod as is the current requirement.

If these changes alter your plan significantly, you will need to do a new plan. If it is simply a change of numbers, please make your change, initial it, and keep a copy onsite ready for any visiting authority.

There is no need to send slightly amended plans to the Synod.

New plans or significantly amended plans should still go to Presbytery and then to Synod.

Sign-in

The requirements for signing-in have not changed; people attending a service should provide their name and contact details when they enter so that they can be used for contact tracing.

Information sourced from the update from the Premier:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/media-releases/restrictions-will-be-eased-from-26-february>

Please also see attached generic posters promoting COVID-Safe behaviours that you are welcome to share and display in your places of worship. Multilingual versions of these posters are [available here](#).

Other useful multilingual resources are [available here](#).

Thank you for your continued efforts in prioritising health and well-being.

Rev. Bronwyn Murphy
Associate Secretary

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