



COVID-19 Update

Tuesday 13 October 2020

Dear friends in Christ,

The Queensland Government has released a new [COVID Safe Industry Plan for Places of Worship](#) and an updated [Restrictions on Businesses, Activities and Undertakings Direction](#).

What's changed

- The Uniting Church participated with the Heads of Churches in a meeting with Queensland Health to open dialogue regarding the Industry Plan for Places of Worship. This meeting established that:
 - Home worship groups and meetings must comply with the [Movement and Gathering Public Health Direction](#) and be guided by the [COVID Safe Industry Plan for Places of Worship](#). This **does not** require the completion of the Industry Plan for Places of Worship checklist and statement of compliance being completed and displayed at the residence whilst home worship is occurring.
 - There is a delay in updating the [COVID Safe Industry Plan for Places of Worship](#). The Synod COVID Team will ensure the [safety management plans on the Synod website](#) are updated with the latest information from the government when it is available.
 - If you wish to provide refreshments at church you are permitted to stand to consume food and drink. However, there is still to be no buffet or self-service of items and physical distancing between people must be maintained.
 - Outdoor activities are calculated as 1 person to 2 square metres.
- Outdoor activities are seen as a lower risk environment than indoor venues. Activities outdoors, considering sun safety, should be encouraged.
- A number of operational resources have been updated. Please refer to the updated documentation below. All updates have been highlighted to easily identify the changes. The documentation includes:
 - [Safety management plan for church services](#)
 - [Safety management plan – Resuming meetings in homes](#)
 - [Safety management plan for resuming children's, youth and brigade activities](#)
 - [Checklist and safety management plan for toddler activities](#)
 - [Safety management plan for resuming congregational activities](#)
 - [Safety management plan for resuming lawn bowls](#)

What's stayed the same

- Physical distancing (minimum 1.5m) is the best way to reduce the spread of COVID-19, coupled with regular hand washing.
- Whilst there has been changes made to Public Health Directions, we are required to follow the [COVID Safe Industry Plan for Places of Worship](#) and [Food Services](#).
- Capacity calculations for indoor spaces remain unchanged.
- The maximum number for a funeral or wedding is 100 people regardless of whether it is indoors or outdoors, and numbers must also be within the area calculation and be able to physically distance.
- Indoor event numbers and associated requirements are unchanged.

- o For buildings less than 200m²—one person per two square metres to a maximum of 50 persons.
- o For buildings 200m² or larger—one person per four square metres.
- o Whilst household groups are permitted to sit together they are counted as individuals when determining your area capacity (i.e. a family of four accounts for 16m² of space).
- o Physical distancing between different household groups must always be 1.5m.
- The safety of congregations and vulnerable people in our communities is our priority.

JobKeeper

Eligibility for JobKeeper is determined by actual turnover. The scheme recognises that we may not know our eligibility status until later in October. The deadlines for payments have been extended to the end of the month in recognition of this. We do not have a final position on our eligibility but we continue to work with the ATO and are nearing a point in time when we will be able to make an announcement. Until such time as an announcement is made, congregations should assume that they will **not** be eligible for JobKeeper.

Warden briefings

The COVID Warden briefings continue each Wednesday at 11am. They are very well attended and lots of information is shared. If you require a link to this voluntary meeting, please email COVID19@ucaqld.com.au. If you have not notified us of the name and contact details of your COVID Warden, please email them to COVID19@ucaqld.com.au.

Our next COVID-19 update is planned for Tuesday 20 October 2020. Your questions or feedback about this update or COVID-19 are welcome—please email COVID19@ucaqld.com.au.

My sincere thanks for your ongoing work and support as we navigate our way through this time.



Rev Heather den Houting
General Secretary
Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod