

COVID-19

# VICTORIA FAQs

Metro Melbourne AND Regional Victoria AS AT NOVEMBER 19, 2020



## Current restrictions for Victoria as of 11:59pm November 8 include:

- **Travel:** There is no longer any restriction on travel between Regional Victoria and Metropolitan Melbourne.
- **Religion:** Up to **50 people** plus a faith leader may attend an outdoor religious gathering proximate to a place of worship. **Indoor religious gatherings** are allowed with a maximum of **20 people (up to 10 per group, with each group required to remain FIVE METRES apart)** plus a faith leader.
- **Community venues:** Open for all purposes with up to 20 people maximum indoors and up to 10 people per space, subject to density quotient of 1 per 4m2.
  - No more than 5 people per space singing or using wind instruments for amateur groups.
- **Indoor entertainment venues:** Open: Cinemas; music halls, concert halls and auditoriums; galleries and museums; and State Library of Victoria - Open for a maximum of 20 people per space (e.g. each screening room, gallery space or auditorium). - 1.5m distance between bookings, maximum bookings of 10 people. - Performance times (including film screenings) staggered to minimum interval of 30 mins between sessions to avoid crowds in foyers and bathrooms.
- **Creative studios,** including venues for art and music: Up to 10 people per space with 1.5 metres distance between patrons and subject to density quotient 1 per 4m2 .
  - No more than 5 people per space singing or using wind instruments for amateur groups
- **Electronic gaming:** Electronic gaming to equivalent of 25 per cent of indoor hospitality limit of 40 patrons or up to 10 patrons per venue per electronic gaming room. Additional COVIDSafe requirements apply.
- **Hospitality** – Food and Drink Venues open for seated service subject to limits:
  - Indoor “Spaces” can be separated by either temporary structures or at least 5 metres between collections of 10 seats or less, subject to the overall indoor cap of 40 and a density of 1 per 4m2

- Outdoor: Up to 70 patrons per venue, subject to density of 1 per 2m2 and maximum groups of 10 persons.
- Live music: Requirement of 5m distance from audience, and 2m between performers. Recommend live music performed outdoors where possible. Performance and rehearsal rules for professionals apply to all live music settings. Performers are excluded from venue cap.
- **Playcentres:** Open with patron cap of 20 and group limits of 10, density quotient of 1 per 4m2. Spectators are limited to one parent, guardian or carer only, where child requires supervision.
- **Physical distancing** (1.5m) and maximum occupancy quotients must still be observed
- **Good hand hygiene** must continue to be followed
- **Do not go to work** if you are unwell
- **Cough or sneeze** into a tissue or elbow.
- **COVID safety plans** are required for all workplaces (including churches, halls etc) including:
  - Attendance Contact Lists
  - Cleaning protocols
  - Physical distancing, maximum occupancy and all other COVID signage
- **Face Masks** (must be a fitted face mask – bandanas, scarves etc are no longer acceptable) must be worn outside the home including at all times in the workplace. Fines for non-compliance: \$200 for individuals and up to \$9,913 for employers.
- **Work: Continue to work from home if you can.** Permitted Worker Permits are no longer required anywhere in Victoria.
- **Weddings:** allowed with up to 10 people. This limit includes the two witnesses. The couple, the celebrant, and one photographer are not included in this limit.
- **Funerals:** allowed with up to **20 people indoors** or **50 people outdoors** (not including infants under 12 months of age or people required to conduct the funeral).
- **Public gatherings:** up to 10 people outdoors (infants under 12 months of age are not included in the cap)

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Uniting Church in Australia  
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA



# COVID-19 VICTORIA FAQs

Metro Melbourne AND Regional Victoria AS AT NOVEMBER 19, 2020

- **Visitors to the home:** Up to two people can visit a household once per day. Infants under 12 months are not included in this cap, and other dependents can also attend if they cannot be left unattended or cared for in another setting. The two people may be from different households.
- **Sport and physical recreation for 18 and under:** indoor physical recreation and non-contact sport, with certain caps.
- **Sport and physical recreation for adults:** indoor fitness and fitness classes (up to 10 people in a space and 20 in a venue, subject to density limits).
- **Fitness or dance classes** allowed outdoors with trainer plus up to ten people. Allowed indoors for the purpose of recording and broadcast, up to five people.

*As of 12/11/2020*

Send any questions to:  
[CrisisManagement@victas.uca.org.au](mailto:CrisisManagement@victas.uca.org.au)  
 or contact your Presbytery.

To help identify items which are new, or have been updated since the last FAQ, simply look for:



This week's updates:

- **HOLY COMMUNION** P6
- **CROSSLIGHT** P9
- **BORDER CLOSURES** P9

## How will we know about further updates?

Regularly check the latest government advice available at: <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/> and at: <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-covid-19-restrictions-roadmaps>

The Synod Crisis Management Team monitors changes on a daily basis. Compliance and Pastoral advice will continue to be issued via emailed letters from the General Secretary and/or Moderator. All other relevant advice will continue

to be sent via the special Coronavirus editions of Synod eNews, which will appear in your inbox from "Communications". eNews and emailed letters are sent to all Presbyteries, all ministers, all church councils. These FAQs are updated weekly, available every Thursday.

## The Premier has flagged 11.59pm on November 22 for the next easing of restrictions.

See Page 11 for what is likely to be announced.

*As of 19/11/2020*

## MULTI-LINGUAL RESOURCES

### Where can I find the current government guidelines in other languages?

Victorian Multi-cultural Commission Coronavirus (COVID-19): In-language advice and information at <https://www.multiculturalcommission.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-language-advice-and-information>

Ethnolink have information available in 51 languages at: [www.ethnolink.com.au/covid-19-coronavirus-translated-resources/](http://www.ethnolink.com.au/covid-19-coronavirus-translated-resources/)

The Department of Home Affairs has extensive multi-lingual resources available at: <https://covid19inlanguage.homeaffairs.gov.au/>

The Victorian Multicultural Commission have release multi-lingual resources including:

Audio messages

- <https://cloud.think-hq.com.au/s/m9SX3ntGGqr7Sai>

Posters (JPG and PDF)

- <https://cloud.think-hq.com.au/s/m9SX3ntGGqr7Sai>

Social Media banners

- <https://cloud.think-hq.com.au/s/m9SX3ntGGqr7Sai>

*As of 13/08/2020*





## LIVE-STREAMING WORSHIP

### How many people can be involved in live-streaming worship services?

Recording and live-streaming of worship services is permitted providing all of the following guidelines are met.

The streaming of worship services is permitted only where the following social distancing requirements can be met and the total number of people at the premises is limited to 20 with no more than 10 in a group (which includes those participating in the ceremony and those providing technical support). This means a maximum of 20 people plus a faith leader in total within the building, with attendees spread out in groups of up to 10 per group. Each group of people must remain at least **FIVE METRES** from any other group of people at all times, with no physical interaction between groups. Total attendance numbers remain subject to density quotient of 4m<sup>2</sup> per person.

**The maximum duration of any service is 90 minutes. No food, drink, crockery, utensils, vessels or other equipment may be shared by participants.**

- Every person must wear a fitted facemask
- At least 4sqm of floor area per person is required in the place where the ceremony/performance takes place. This means the immediate area/room around the participants where the ceremony is performed.

In addition, you must take measures to mitigate any risk of disease transmission by ensuring the following measures are in place:

- Exclude persons who are unwell from participating in the production of the live streaming
- People in any of the identified vulnerable groups should carefully consider their need to participate in live streaming. This includes:
  - Those who are immuno-compromised, etc.
  - over 70

- over 65 with significant medical conditions
- Aboriginal people over 50 with significant medical conditions
- Ensure all people present practice good respiratory and hand hygiene and provide appropriate hand washing facilities and hand sanitisers
- If live streaming worship from a church or church building,
  - a COVID Recovery Action Plan Checklist (Sections A, B & C) must be completed and maintained **and a copy sent to:** [elnura.dulakovic@victas.uca.org.au](mailto:elnura.dulakovic@victas.uca.org.au)
  - If live streaming worship from a private residence, with only the residents present, a COVID Recovery Action Plan Checklist and Permitted Worker Permit are not required.

*As of 12/11/2020*

## PRE-RECORDING WORSHIP

### Are there any differences in the requirements for pre-recording worship vs live-streaming?

As the basic process is the same for both, the same practices should be applied.

*As of 06/04/2020*

## SAFE (DIGITAL) MINISTRY

### What safety measures should be adopted for ministry within the digital space?

The Culture of Safety Unit has prepared some guidelines for leaders and communities, offering commentary and interpretation of how our existing Child Safety resources and policies, and the Uniting Church Code of Ethics, continue to shape our digital ministry practices. To view the guidelines visit: [www.victas.uca.org.au/safe-digital-ministry](http://www.victas.uca.org.au/safe-digital-ministry)

*As of 07/04/2020*





## GATHERINGS

### What face-to-face gatherings are permitted at church?

**Indoor religious gatherings** are allowed with a maximum of 20 people (10 per group) plus a faith leader attending with specific cleaning requirements and COVIDSafe plans. This means a maximum of 20 people plus a faith leader in total within the building, with attendees spread out in groups of up to 10 per group. Each group of people must remain at least **FIVE METRES** from any other group of people at all times, with no physical interaction between groups. Total attendance numbers remain subject to density quotient of 4m<sup>2</sup> per person.

**The maximum duration of any service is 90 minutes. No food, drink, crockery, utensils, vessels or other equipment may be shared by participants.**

*As of 12/11/2020*

- **Outdoor religious gatherings** for up to 50 people plus a faith leader proximate to the church are allowed, using appropriate social distancing and hygiene practices
- It is not permitted to conduct both indoor and outdoor gatherings at the same time.

*As of 29/10/2020*

**Weddings** may be held with the maximum number of 10 people present, using appropriate social distancing and hygiene practices. The couple, the celebrant and one photographer are not included in the 10 person limit.

*NOTE: The above advice is correct. The current information shown on the Govt Coronavirus website is incorrect- it has not been updated in accordance with the Chief Health Officer's latest Directions.*

**Funerals** may be held in places of worship, with the maximum number of 20 people present (not including infants under 12 months of age or people required to conduct the funeral), using appropriate social distancing and hygiene practices.

Up to 50 people are permitted to attend outdoor funerals (not including infants under 12 months of age or people required to conduct the funeral).

*As of 05/11/2020*

### Is singing permitted at gatherings?

The current guidance issued by the State Government for non-professional music (including rehearsals) is as follows:

Each person involved must:

- **For those facing an audience (ie worship leaders facing the congregation):**

- maintain a distance of at least 5 metres from all members of the public at all times during the music/singing;
- not be directly above any other member of the public at any time during the music/singing; and

- **For those who are part of an audience (ie worshippers):**

- maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from each other person at all times during the music/singing;
- must wear a face mask

- **Where the music/singing is indoors a maximum of 5 persons are permitted to sing** or use or play a wind instrument or a brass instrument at any one time; and if any shared equipment is used, it must be cleaned between users.

*As of 12/11/2020*

### Physical distancing

PHYSICAL DISTANCING requirements may mean that you cannot have the maximum number of attendees at a gathering. The rule of 4 square metres per person must be maintained.

To calculate the maximum capacity of any building, measure the floorspace (length x width) in metres, then divide by 4. For example: if the inside of your church measures 10m x 6m = 60 square metres ÷ 4 = 15 people is its maximum capacity. Even if Covid regulations state that up to 20 people can attend, the maximum number of people, including those conducting the ceremony, who would be able to be in your church at any time would still be 15.

On the other hand, if the inside of your church measures 10m x 40m = 400 square metres ÷ 4 = 100 people is the maximum capacity. However, if Covid regulations state that up to 20 people can attend, then only 20 people can attend.

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**Which figure do we use? Government maximum numbers or the 4 square metre rule?** In all cases, the **smaller** number is the one to use.

*As of 17/09/2020*

## Physical distancing signs

All church buildings must display signage showing the maximum number of people who can be accommodated in any space. Once you have calculated the maximum numbers for each space, you may take advantage of the templates created to make your signage. These are available at: <https://victas.uca.org.au/all-you-need-to-know-answers-to-your-frequently-asked-questions/>

## What face-to-face gatherings are permitted away from church?

Up to two people can visit a household once per day. Infants under 12 months are not included in this cap, and other dependents can also attend if they cannot be left unattended or cared for in another setting. The two people may be from different households.

Whilst this provides additional opportunities for pastoral care visits, these should be prearranged to ensure that those being visited remain within the current daily limit on visitors.

Church Council and congregation committee meetings should continue to be held via teleconference and/or videoconference wherever possible.

*As of 22/10/2020*

## CHURCH/COMMUNITY HALLS

### Under what circumstances can Community/Church Halls be used?

Before using any church owned buildings, or allowing any other group to use church-owned buildings, please complete the Recovery Action Plan Checklist at: <https://victas.uca.org.au/download/668/faq/8852/recovery-action-plan-checklist>

Community/Church Halls and similar such buildings may be used for some purposes, providing a minimum floorspace of 4m<sup>2</sup> per person is available and all other physical distancing and hygiene requirements can be met.

**WORSHIP SERVICES** – Church or Community Halls can be used for Indoor religious gatherings with a maximum of 20 people (10 per group) plus a faith leader attending with specific cleaning requirements and COVIDSafe plans. This means a maximum of 20 people plus a faith leader in total within the building, with attendees spread out in groups of up to 10 per group. Each group of people must remain at least **FIVE METRES** from any other group of people at all times, with no physical interaction between groups. Total attendance numbers remain subject to density quotient of 4m<sup>2</sup> per person.

*As of 12/11/2020*

**The maximum duration of any service is 90 minutes. No food, drink, crockery, utensils, vessels or other equipment may be shared by participants.**

*As of 29/10/2020*

**ESSENTIAL PUBLIC SERVICES** – If halls or other facilities are intended to be used for Essential Public Services such as food banks, homeless services or education, they can remain open for the delivery of these services (applying all other health and safety measures). If you are in doubt about whether the service is an Essential Public Service, seek advice via your presbytery or contact [uca.legal@victas.uca.org.au](mailto:uca.legal@victas.uca.org.au).

**SUPPORT GROUPS** – If hosting a support group, a maximum number of 20 people can be present plus the facilitator(s) providing a minimum floorspace of 4m<sup>2</sup> per person is available and all other physical distancing and hygiene requirements can be met.

### EXERCISE GROUPS –

- **For 18 and under:** indoor physical recreation and non-contact sport is now permitted, with certain caps.
- **For adults:** indoor fitness and fitness classes (up to 10 people in a space and 20 in a venue, subject to density limits) is now permitted.

*Continued P6*



# COVID-19 VICTORIA FAQs

Metro Melbourne AND Regional Victoria AS AT NOVEMBER 19, 2020

- **Outdoors:** Contact and non-contact sport allowed for 18 and under. For adults: Outdoor non-contact sports only (minimum number required to play game). Outdoor fitness (up to 10 people or a household excluding the trainer).

*As of 29/10/2020*

**BUSINESSES** – If an organisation or individual rents space, the government guidelines for the conduct of that particular category of business would apply. These can be found at <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorias-restrictionlevels-covid-19>. If in doubt, seek advice from your presbytery or contact [uca.legal@victas.uca.org.au](mailto:uca.legal@victas.uca.org.au).

**RENTED & HIRED FACILITIES** –  
**Who is responsible for ensuring properties are COVID compliant?**

- If you rent hire or licence out property to more than one organisation or group on a casual or non-exclusive basis (eg support groups, community groups, classes) using our standard Hire Agreement (Victoria) whether one-off or recurring, the Responsibility for maintaining all COVID-19 compliance, including cleaning to standard before and after every use, remains with the congregation as the responsible body. However, you may pass on the reasonable additional cost of cleaning or other necessary Covid-19 safety measures to the Hirer if you notify them in advance of the additional cost.
- If you rent out property to one organisation or group on an exclusive use basis (under a Lease or Licence), the responsibility for maintaining all COVID-19 compliance falls to the tenant.
- If in doubt, seek advice from your presbytery or contact [uca.legal@victas.uca.org.au](mailto:uca.legal@victas.uca.org.au)

*As of 17/09/2020*

**COVID-SAFE PLANS** – Required for some gatherings

**Do we need to complete a Covid-Safe plan as well as the UCA's Covid Recovery Action Checklist?**

If you have completed the [Covid Recovery Action Checklist](#) and are keeping this up-to-date, this can be your Covid-Safe Plan. There is no need to complete a separate plan.

*As of 12/11/2020*

**What activities can/cannot be staged in/on our property?**

As more activities become permitted during the easing of Covid restrictions, Synod's Crisis Management Team have prepared a quick reference guide document for many of the non-worship uses of church property.

<https://victas.uca.org.au/download/668/faq/9475/congregations-groups-permitted-activity-guide>

*As of 12/11/2020*



*As of 19/11/2020*

## HOLY COMMUNION

**What changes to worship services are permissible?**

Assembly Standing Committee has approved temporary pastoral measure guidelines for congregations and faith communities to enable the celebration of Holy Communion as part of online worship. These guidelines have been extended to June 2021 and can be found at:

<https://www.assembly.uca.org.au/news/item/3163-temporary-arrangements-for-holy-communion>

*As of 19/11/2020*

## CORONAVIRUS FUNERALS

**Are there any special requirements for holding the funeral of someone who has died of Coronavirus?**

The Victorian and Tasmanian governments each have guidelines for cases of suspected or confirmed COVID-19. These mean that some cultural and ministry funeral practices need to change, especially how families interact with the body of a person who has (or may have) died with COVID-19. Ministers need to consider how their ministry practice may need to alter and should discuss with Church Councils ahead of time how families can be supported in this situation.

*As of 17/04/2020*

## PERMITTED WORKER PERMITS

Permitted Worker Permits are no longer required anywhere in the state of Victoria.

*As of 12/11/2020*





## MINISTERS IN HIGH RISK GROUPS

### What if a minister is part of a Coronavirus high risk group?

#### All people who are

- aged over 70,
- over 65 with chronic health conditions,
- immune-compromised, or
- Indigenous people over 50 with chronic health conditions

**should carefully consider their need to participate.** This includes ministry agents in these at-risk groups, whether retired or in active placement, who might have otherwise led funerals.

Ministry agents in these risk groups are encouraged to talk with their Church Council and have clear arrangements in place in advance as to who may be called on for funerals, especially where a person has died with confirmed or suspected COVID-19.

*As of 17/04/2020*

## RENT RELIEF REQUESTS

### What do we do if we are approached by tenants for Covid-19 rent relief?

Rent relief is not automatic. Our Property Services and Legal departments have compiled guidelines for handling rent relief requests, both commercial and residential. If you wish to support a rent relief application, there is a form which needs to be completed before any rent relief can be offered. Details available on the first info sheet at:

[www.victas.uca.org.au/resources/property/forms-and-resources/](http://www.victas.uca.org.au/resources/property/forms-and-resources/)

*As of 16/04/2020*

## OP SHOPS

### Can we keep our Op Shop open?

In regional Victoria, Op-shops can continue to operate unless directed otherwise by local authorities, and provided that social distancing measures are put in place for staff, volunteers and visitors. You may of course choose to adjust how you operate your shop, such as operating only on a case-by-case basis by request to support local needs and/or in partnership with local community services. It should also be noted that some Op Shops may need to close for a short time while addressing the current requirements.

**Op Shops run by Uniting VicTas must follow the current guidance issued by Uniting.**

**UCA Op Shops, as church workplaces, are required to complete sections A and B of the Recovery Action Plan Checklist to ensure that they are Covid-compliant and a copy sent to [elnura.dulakovic@victas.uca.org.au](mailto:elnura.dulakovic@victas.uca.org.au)**

Current Government advice for volunteers remains that all staff and volunteers aged 70+ or who fall into any of the other COVID high-risk groups should stay at home as much as you can.

Gloves should be worn when handling cash and any donated goods. Donated goods should be received contactless where possible. Donations should be stored in a location where workers won't have contact with them for a period of up to 72 hours. All items should be cleaned in line with COVID cleaning practices as soon as practical. Hands should be washed regularly whilst, and immediately after, handling any donated items. It is also recommended that WARNING signs should be displayed to ensure all staff and volunteers adhere to these precautions.

In line with social distancing requirements, the number of persons in an Op Shop at any one time should be limited, using a rule of one person per 4sqm, including staff and volunteers, and people should remain a distance of 1.5m apart wherever possible. It may be helpful to mark this distance on the floor near service counters as a reminder to visitors.

*As of 12/11/2020*

## KINDERGARTEN

### We have a kindergarten operating from a church-owned building. Do we need to close it?

All Kindergartens and early Childhood Learning Centres may open. All appropriate risk mitigation measures should continue to be observed.

*As of 17/09/2020*





## WORSHIP RESOURCES

### Where can I access worship resources to help me keep connected?

Our worship resources page, which caters for all people across our Synod, is updated each week. Available at: <https://victas.uca.org.au/resources/covid-19-worship-resources/>

*As of 06/04/2020*

## ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING LICENCES

### What does it cost for a Zoom meeting licence?

If you plan on using Zoom frequently and/or require full functionality, Synod Ministries and Operations along with other Synods have negotiated with Zoom to purchase a bulk deal.

As such we are able to provide Zoom licences for a cost of just \$7.93 per month.

If your presbytery or congregation is interested, please contact:

[Shweta.Paliwal@victas.uca.org.au](mailto:Shweta.Paliwal@victas.uca.org.au)

You will need to provide: Number of licences required and the details of the contact person (including their email address)

*As of 20/04/2020*

## SYNOD

### What if we need to contact someone from Synod Ministries and Operations?

Whilst they may be working remotely, all Synod staff are still working. Please contact any staff member as normal, but please be aware that they may not have all of the answers at their fingertips quite as readily as usual.

*As of 19/11/2020*

## MARKETS

### Can we hold garage sales and/or markets?

There is no specific mention of garage sales in any Covid guidelines, but it is logical to treat these as a market:

- Market stalls that predominately provide food and drink have continued to operate. Market stalls that sell non-food and drink products are also permitted to trade
- The market operator is responsible for ensuring the four square metre rule is applied to indoor spaces. Customers should keep 1.5 metres in between them and other people who are not part of their household.

Whilst it is not a requirement for markets generally, it is strongly recommended to

- maintain a contact tracing register (ie name and contact number) for anyone attending the Garage Sale or market and
- have a process for orderly flow of people (eg everyone goes in 1 direction, entrance and exit points and a total number limit) to ensure the social distancing requirements can still be safely met.

*As of 17/09/2020*

## CONGREGATION WEBSITE TRAINING

### Will training sessions for new congregation websites still go ahead?

These have been postponed indefinitely. Congregations and presbyteries that have booked training days will be contacted with alternative dates when this becomes possible.

*As of 27/03/2020*







As of 19/11/2020

## CROSSLIGHT

### Will *Crosslight* continue to be published?

The December edition of *Crosslight* will be printed and distributed at the beginning of December. The Communications Team thanks you for your support. For those who have become accustomed to reading *Crosslight* in its online “flip book” format, we will continue to make this available in addition to the printed version.

The October “flip book” edition is available from <https://crosslight.org.au/>

News and feature stories are posted to *Crosslight*'s website on a regular basis available at: [www.crosslight.org.au](http://www.crosslight.org.au)

As of 19/11/2020

## UPDATED INFORMATION

### How will we know if the information on this page is still current?

This FAQ sheet will be updated WEEKLY and re-sent in every Coronavirus edition of eNews. Please check this page each week for anything which is of particular interest. If in doubt, check with Synod Ministries and Operations or with your presbytery.

As of 06/04/2020

## OTHER QUESTIONS

### What if we have questions that aren't on this FAQ sheet?

Ask the relevant person/department at Synod or your presbytery. This FAQ document will contain additional topics as they become known.

As of 06/04/2020

## COVID SAFE APP

### Should we encourage downloading the Federal Government's Covid-Safe tracing app?

Synod Ministries and Operations would strongly recommend that all people in ministry download the Covid-Safe tracing app and also encourage all Uniting Church members to do so. As worship services recommence, this is a simple measure to help maintain the safety of our members as they start to gather again.

As of 14/05/2020

## FIRST AID PRECAUTIONS

### In the event of someone needing first aid treatment, are there any additional precautions required?

Anyone administering first aid should use general droplet and contact precautions, namely a face mask for the person they are treating which they should encourage the person to apply themselves, a face mask and gloves for the first aider, and goggles for the first aider (if available).

In the event that a first aider has a reason to suspect a person is infected with COVID-19, they should try to limit their contact with that person as much as they can, meaning they should avoid physical contact (e.g. checking pulses and performing physical assessments) unless absolutely necessary, such as performing CPR or putting people in a recovery position if they are unconscious and/or struggling to breathe.

As of 11/06/2020



As of 19/11/2020

## BORDER CLOSURES

### Who needs a cross-border permit, and where are these available?

The NSW Border closure is being managed by the NSW government. Information, including Border Declaration Permit applications are available on the Services NSW website at <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-covid-19-nsw-border-declaration-permit>

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Uniting Church in Australia  
SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA



The NSW government has announced that border restrictions with Victoria will cease as of 12.01am on November 23.

The Tasmanian government has announced that border restrictions will be further eased on November 27 permitting Victorians to enter Tasmania. For further details visit <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-covid-19-nsw-border-entry-permit>

*As of 19/11/2020*

## JOBKEEPER PAYMENTS

### What is happening with the Jobkeeper payments?

In July, the Government announced an extension of the JobKeeper Payment until 28 March 2021. The Synod was required to re-assess eligibility for the JobKeeper extension using actual turnover in the September quarter 2020 to demonstrate that it met the relevant decline in turnover test to be eligible for JobKeeper for the period 28 September 2020 to 3 January 2021.

We can now advise that the Synod has demonstrated eligibility and will receive JobKeeper payments for eligible people paid through the Synod or CSPS payrolls.

The JobKeeper Payment rate has been reduced and paid at two rates:

- From 28 September 2020 to 3 January 2021, the payment rate will reduce to \$1,200 per fortnight for all eligible people who were working for 20 hours or more a week on average, and \$750 per fortnight for people who were working for less than 20 hours a week on average in the reference periods.
- From 4 January 2021 to 28 March 2021, the payment rate will further reduce to \$1,000 per fortnight for all eligible people who were working for 20 hours or more a week on average, and \$650 per fortnight for people who were working for less than 20 hours a week on average in the reference periods.

Our people are not required to resubmit a new nomination declaration and Congregations do not need to provide financial information to support the turnover tests. Eligible people will be notified of their payment tier by a message on their pay slip.

Please note that the Synod will need to demonstrate that the relevant decline in turnover test in the December quarter 2020 has been met to remain eligible for the JobKeeper payments from 4 January 2021 to 28 March 2021. Synod expects to be in a position to confirm eligibility in January 2021.

Further information is available in the JobKeeper Payment extension fact sheet. <https://treasury.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-08/Fact-sheet-JobKeeper-Payment-extension-1.pdf>

Specific payroll queries can be directed to: [Payroll-UCA@victas.uca.org.au](mailto:Payroll-UCA@victas.uca.org.au)

Congregations should record the JobKeeper payments in their accounts as a receipt – “Grants received Government”. **The amount should not be paid to ministers/staff as they have already been paid through the normal payroll processes.**

The Synod will manage all reporting to the ATO, including monthly declarations of revenue. This is based on the Synod operations and not on individual congregation results. There is no need to submit monthly revenue results.

Unfortunately efforts to qualify for the Cash Boost Payment have been unsuccessful at this stage.

Congregations are reminded that the JobKeeper Payment has been implemented by the Government to help employers keep staff and restart when the crisis is over.

### Some questions:

#### Do casuals need to submit timesheets?

Where a casual is normally paid by submitting timesheets, these need to continue to be submitted, even if it's for a small shift.

*Continued P11*





### Do staff need to continue to work?

Yes. The JobKeeper payment processes allow an employer to reasonably alter an employee's duties, location and days of work. We would advise congregations to find all staff (including casuals) some work tasks to do even if it's from home. You might need to be creative and/or ask the staff what they may be able to contribute. Some ideas shared in the zoom meeting – for Playgroup workers contacting parents, providing activity packs, zoom catch up with children, sing alongs etc. Admin staff may also be used to keep in contact with members, email/deliver newsletters, filing etc. The work may not be what they normally do.

### For Part-time/Casuals who receive a top up payment do LSL levies (portable LSL) apply?

Portable LSL Authority - levy for "Community Service Workers": For those employees who are receiving a top-up payment, the top-up portion is not included in the calculation of the LSL levy.

The situation is the same as what has been calculated in the past (the actual total hours worked and the totals ordinary pay received by the worker, not including the JobKeeper top-up payment).

*As of 15/10/2020*

## NEXT STEPS TO RECOVERY

### When can we expect further easing of restrictions?

There are a wide range of activities earmarked, but not yet confirmed, for the next round of easing, including:

### What restrictions may be eased next?

There are a wide range of activities earmarked, but not yet confirmed, for the next round of easing, including:

- **Private gatherings:** up to 10 visitors at a time can visit a household.
- **Public gatherings:** up to 50 people can gather outdoors from any number of households, excludes infants under 12 months.

### ■ Indoor physical recreation – contact or non-contact:

- Patron cap of up to 100 people.
- Group or class size up to 20 people.
- Density quotient of 1 per 4m<sup>2</sup>

### ■ Indoor community sport – contact or non-contact:

- Patron cap of up to 100 people.
- Group or class size up to 20 people.
- Density quotient of 1 per 4m<sup>2</sup>
- Large sporting venues will be able to open with a 25 per cent venue patron cap, with each space subject to the density quotient.

### ■ Outdoor sport and recreation – contact or non-contact:

- Patron cap of 500, group sizes align with public gathering limits of 50 people.
- Density quotient of 1 per 4m<sup>2</sup>

### ■ Playcentres: group limit of 20, patron cap of 50, Density quotient of 1 per 4m<sup>2</sup>

### ■ Indoor religious gatherings and ceremonies: Allowed for up to 100 in total (in groups of up to 20) with density quotient of 1 per 4m<sup>2</sup>

### ■ Outdoor religious gatherings and ceremonies: Allowed for groups up to 500 in total (in groups of up to 50) with density quotient of 1 per 4m<sup>2</sup>

### ■ Weddings: Allowed with up to 100 members of the public, density quotient of 1 per 4m<sup>2</sup>

- At a private residence: private gathering limits

### ■ Funerals: Allowed with up to 100 members of the public, density quotient of 1 per 4m<sup>2</sup>

- At a private residence: private gathering limits

### ■ Hospitality Venues:

- Indoor: Total venue capacity of 100 patrons per venue indoors, subject to density of 1 per 4m<sup>2</sup> and a maximum group size of 20 persons.

- Outdoor: Up to 200 patrons per venue outdoors, subject to density of 1 per 2m<sup>2</sup> o Total venue capacity of 300 people.

### ■ Personal Services: Hairdressing, beauty and personal care services: Masks can be removed for the person receiving the service of procedure if necessary, such as facial waxing, facials, beard trimmings and piercings around the mouth, nose and cheeks.

*Continued P12*





- **Creative studios, including venues for art and music:** Up to 20 people per space with 1.5 metres distance between patrons and subject to density quotient.

A full list of planned restrictions to be eased can be found at <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-11/Summary-of-statewide-restrictions-8-nov-2020.pdf>

**Full details of the November 22 announcements will be contained in the November 26 FAQs.**

*As of 12/11/2020*

During this time of second wave lockdowns, it is important that we all take care of ourselves and of each other. Sometimes we may need help to do this. Below are just some of the places you can turn to if you, or someone you know, may need some assistance coping with Stage 3 or 4 COVID restrictions:

## WELLBEING

- Lifeline** ph **13 11 14**
- Beyond Blue** ph **1300 22 4636**
- Kids Helpline** ph **1800 55 1800**
- 1800RESPECT** ph **1800 737 732**  
(Domestic & Sexual Violence)
- SafeSteps** ph **1800 015 188**  
(support & planning to escape domestic violence)
- LGBTQIA** ph **1800 184 527**  
(peer driven support)
- Alcohol or Drug related issues**  
ph **1800 888 236**

A great workbook to help build resilience during isolation: <https://thewellnesssociety.org/free-coronavirus-anxiety-workbook/>

YMCA – Virtual Y – online platform with loads of fitness, nutrition, wellbeing, family and youth content. <https://virtualy.ymca.org.au>

Vic Govt Food and personal care packages for people in mandatory self-isolation, delivered to your door.

ph **1800 675 398**

## FINANCIAL

### Centrelink

Online financial resources for existing customers: [www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/help-emergency](http://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/help-emergency)

**Centrelink Crisis Payments** ph **132 850**

### Uniting Vic Tas

<https://www.unitingvictas.org.au/contact-us/>

**Aust Govt** (early release of Superannuation):

[www.australia.gov.au](http://www.australia.gov.au)

