

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR CONGREGATIONS - 23 June

### **How can I do worship at home safely in a small group?**

Please ensure you have sufficient spacing to adhere to the 1.5m distancing rule and the 4 square metre rule, and please don't serve any food or drinks. A maximum of five (5) visitors are allowed in your home at any one time in addition to householders.

### **What if I wake up in the morning and don't feel well?**

Please DO NOT go to worship or another person's home for home worship. Instead, you should seek appropriate medical advice.

### **Physical distancing (no handshakes or hugs)**

If you are meeting with people at home or at church please remember to not hug or shake hands in greeting. An 'elbow bump' can be an alternative. Please make this clear in the Passing of the Peace.

### **How do I calculate the 4m<sup>2</sup> rule?**

Measure the floor space of your room and divide this number by 4. Eg your room is 5m x 4m = 20m<sup>2</sup>, therefore you can have 5 people in this room.

### **Can food and drink be served after worship?**

Current Government advice says that this cannot happen at the moment. If people wish to bring their own food or drink (in personal containers) for personal consumption this is OK.

### **Layout of seating and entry/exit points**

Consider moving the seating in your worship space to allow for the 1.5m distancing between people or family groups. You may need to section off every other pew or row of chairs to achieve this. Also consider if you have the possibility of having a separate entry and exit door to your space so that foot traffic can move in one direction. Arrows marked on the floor can assist with this.

### **How will we encourage good hygiene?**

Please provide hand sanitizer at all entry and exit point to your worship space. Cleaning wipes should be used after each worship time to disinfect frequently touched surfaces, including chair backs, door handles, railings, offering baskets, toilet facilities and any other surfaces that may have been touched by multiple people.

### **How will we record contact details of attendees?**

The linked [Sign In sheet](#) must be placed at the entry point to your worship space and be completed by everyone who enters the building. This record should be signed by the responsible person at the completion of worship and retained in your church office for a minimum of four weeks after the date.

### **How will we ensure the limit on people attending?**

Please communicate with your members regarding arrangements for attending worship (Some congregations have started a booking system for attendance). Please ensure that your church doors are closed to the general public while you have your maximum number of people in the building. You may need to consider placing a sign on the door stating that your church building is currently in use and has reached capacity.

### **Can I have 20 people in the church and 20 in the hall? What about 20 people in the church and 20 outside?**

Government regulations currently state that 20 people is the maximum you can have in a single undivided room, provided physical distancing measures are met. You could hold worship in the hall and the church under the physical distancing constraints but with the obligation to ensure the two groups of 20 at no time become one group of 21 or more, including at time of entry and exit. We would suggest holding one group back from exiting until the other has left.

### **What signage should I put up around the Church premises regarding social distancing etc?**

Please visit <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/signage-and-posters-covid-19> to download various posters that can be used. Some have spaces that you can use to note specific details relating to your worship centre, eg maximum number of people per room, e.g. "This room is 80 square metres and can hold 20 people,"

### **What is our plan for cleaning of communal areas?**

The Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services provides information on cleaning and disinfecting workplaces [HERE](#)

### **What about baptisms, funerals and weddings?**

These ceremonies are permitted under current Government regulations with some restriction on attendees and other requirement. Please check with your pastor or District Office for more information, as this is changing regularly. At present only up to 50 people may attend a funeral in Victoria and up to 20 people may attend a wedding. There is no change signalled for these numbers yet.

### **For Livestreaming, who is considered essential?**

The Pastor and necessary people connected to recording or sound and musicians can be considered essential to livestreaming worship services. No additional attendees are permitted in the church building during this time. Please ensure that all people in the building still adhere to social distancing rules.

Remember:

- Sunday worship gatherings in a church space for each undivided space should be 20 or less people (except for funerals where 50 is allowed if social distancing regulations are followed). The restrictions for meeting in private homes are subject to change. Refer to the link below on religion and ceremony restrictions for up to date information
- Keep 1.5 metres distance from others
- 1 person per 4 square metres (density requirement). This should be calculated in that part of the building usually occupied by worshippers (for instance exclude the nave)
- If you have a cold or flu symptoms, seek testing and stay home until you are well.
- Wash your hands often, wipe frequently touched surfaces, and cover coughs and sneezes.
- Vulnerable people like the elderly and people with chronic health conditions should talk to their doctor about what is appropriate for them.

Please check the Victorian State Government's COVID – 19 regulations for religion and ceremony as they are updated. <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/religion-and-ceremony-restrictions-covid-19>  
Please also refer to the LCA's COVID-19 page for additional information, or see [vic.lca.org.au](http://vic.lca.org.au) (COVID-19 Resources).