



COVID-19 safety management plan for resuming meetings in homes

D/1.1.14

Changes from the previous version are highlighted in yellow

Purpose

This procedure details the management plans for resuming congregational activities that are based in private residences (including manses) in the COVID-19 environment. The COVID-19 virus is highly transmissible from person-to-person and readily spreads to close contacts of infected individuals.

A bible study, home or life group and any other congregational activity that is approved by the Church Council and conducted in a private residence makes the residence a workplace of the UCAQ. The UCAQ is committed to providing a safe workplace for its employees, contractors, visitors, students and volunteers. To meet this commitment the UCAQ will:

- meet its obligations under the *Workplace Health and Safety Act*;
- abide by the relevant Public Health Directions issued by the Queensland Chief Health Officer;
- follow [National COVID-19 safe workplace principles](#),
- commit to continuous improvement.

Activities cannot commence without the approval of the Church Council or Presbytery Standing Committee. It should be noted that whilst the federal and state governments have provided a roadmap for when activities may potentially resume, they cannot resume until Queensland's Chief Health Officer updates the relevant [Public Health Direction](#).

Scope

All ministry agents, staff, volunteers, and activity attendees.

Gathering numbers (as at 3 July 2020)

- Congregational activities are permitted to commence in private residences. The maximum number of people that can gather in a private residence is 100 people including the members of the person's household
- It is the responsibility of the residence owner to ensure the property is safe and appropriately insured for the congregational activity.
- The host must take reasonable steps to encourage visitors to the premises to practise physical distancing to the extent reasonably practicable.
- ***The host is required to ensure that capacities are not breached.*** Payment of any fines imposed on the hosts or attendees for breaching the Public Health Directions are the responsibility of the individuals fined.

Recording attendees (when permitted to operate)

- It is a requirement for all gatherings of a place of worship to keep a list of all attendees. This list **must** include name, email address (**residential address if no email**), telephone number, date and time of patronage of each attendee and be kept for a minimum of 56 days, in the event of contact tracing for COVID-19 is required. As an approved activity of the UCAQ, the host of the meeting in a private residence is required to obtain this information. The information is to be stored securely with the congregation. If



requested, this information must be provided to public health officers **in the state time period**. The details are to be provided to the Church Council and securely stored, not used for any other purpose and deleted after 56 days. Consideration may be given to using the UCare church management software system. Contact the Synod office Business Development Unit to discuss further on onechurchconnect@ucaqld.com.au.

Hosts to submit a safety management plan

- All approved activities must meet the minimum requirements for physical distancing, hygiene and cleaning as detailed in this procedure.
- To provide the Church Council with assurance on how the group plans to meet the requirements, the Church Council should request a safety management plan, detailing how they will meet the requirements.

Physical Distancing Recommendations

- All persons involved or attending the activity should keep at least 1.5m distance from others always.
- Physical distancing guidelines recommend 4m² per person. Room capacity requirements should be adhered to, in addition to appropriate distancing.
- Attendees should be reminded of physical distancing for the activity.

Personal Hygiene

- Hosts and activity attendees are to practice good personal hygiene to limit the spread of germs. This includes:
 - no shaking hands or touching objects unless necessary;
 - sneezing into their elbow;
 - using a tissue and hosts providing a closed bin for disposing of tissues;
 - not touching their face; and
 - thorough hand washing and hand sanitising, especially before and after eating; after coughing or sneezing; after going to the toilet; after changing tasks; after touching potentially contaminated surfaces.
- Hand sanitiser should be made available for attendees to use on arrival and departure from the private residence.
- Personal property that is brought to the activity should be cleaned with a disinfectant wipe (refer Cleaning section).

1. Toilet facilities

- Toilets are to be cleaned before the meeting.
- Liquid soap and towels, preferably disposable, are available in toilets/bathrooms.

Unwell person/s

- If the host, or an occupant of the home, is unwell, the activity must not proceed.
- If an attendee is unwell, even minor symptoms, they must stay home.
- If attendees display any cold-like / flu-like symptoms they will be directed to leave.
- If the host, or an occupant of the home, display any cold-like / flu-like symptoms the activity will cease immediately and attendees asked to leave the home.

2. Suspected or confirmed COVID-19 attendee



- If the host or an attendee suspects they have COVID-19, they must isolate themselves (self-quarantine) immediately.
- They should inform their Ministry Agent or Church Council Chairperson and call a doctor or hospital and tell them their symptoms, recent travel or close contact history.
- If the person has serious symptoms, such as difficulty breathing call 000, ask for an ambulance and notify the officers of the recent travel or close contact history.

3. If the person is at a private residence for a congregational activity

- Isolate the person to prevent the spread. A surgical mask, if available, will be provided for the person to wear.
- Call 13HEALTH and follow directions of the public health officials.
- Transport – ensure the person has transport to their home or to a medical facility. Consider if they can drive themselves, if their vehicle is available, or use taxi or ride-share service ensuring the person wears a mask whilst being transported.
- The host should clean and disinfect the areas where the person and close contacts have been. Do not use those areas until the process is complete. Use personal protective equipment when cleaning (eye protection, gloves, mask, disposal apron, if available).
- Identify and inform: once notification is received by the Ministry Agent or Church Council Chairperson, they should consider who the person has had close contact with. If instructed by public health officials, tell close contacts they may have been exposed and follow advice on quarantine requirements. This is within the requirements of the *Privacy Act*.
- Workers assisting a potentially infectious person should have appropriate PPE and follow hand hygiene procedures.
- The host is responsible for ensuring the residence is thoroughly disinfected before future use.

4. If the person was recently at the Church activity

- Seek advice from public health officials.
- Identify and inform: consider who the person has had close contact with. If instructed by public health officials, tell close contacts they may have been exposed and follow advice on quarantine requirements. This is within the requirements of the *Privacy Act*.
- Clean and disinfect the areas where the person and close contacts have been. Do not use those areas until the process is complete. Use personal protective equipment when cleaning (eye protection, gloves, mask, disposal apron, if available).
- There is not an automatic WHS requirement to close down an entire workplace, particularly if the person infected, or suspected to be infected, has only visited parts of the workplace. A decision on whether to close all or partial sections of the workplace for a period of time will be considered by the executive and in conjunction with directions from public health officials.
- The worksite will be thoroughly disinfected before future use.

5. Vulnerable persons

The following may be considered a vulnerable person COVID-19:

- Over 70 years of age
- Over 65 years of age who have existing health conditions or comorbidities, and
- First Nations People over the age of 50 who have existing health conditions or comorbidities,
- Are significantly immunocompromised or taking immunosuppression therapy;
- Have chronic medical condition, including:
 - Chronic renal failure



- Coronary heart disease or congestive heart failure
- Chronic lung disease including severe asthma (for which frequent medical consultations or the use of multiple medications is required), cystic fibrosis, bronchiectasis, suppurative lung disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or chronic emphysema
- Poorly controlled diabetes
- Poorly controlled hypertension.
- As per government health advice, immunocompromised persons should limit contact with others as much as possible when they travel outside.
- Vulnerable persons should limit contact with others as much as possible when they travel outside.
- Vulnerable workers (paid or volunteers) must have completed a [vulnerable worker risk assessment](#) and have it approved by Church Council before undertaking service duties.

Recommended cleaning pre and post meetings in homes

- Cleaning involving detergent and/or disinfectant is undertaken in all areas used for congregational activities with particular attention on high contact points.
- Hosts should clean the areas used at the start and end of each meeting using a disinfectant solution. Aerosols are to be sprayed onto a disposable cloth and equipment wiped down.
- High touch points will be cleaned throughout the activity.

Hazard and incident notification

- A hazard incident notification form ([WHS forms](#)) is to be completed. In accordance with the Synod Critical Incident Policy, any confirmed COVID-19 case with a member or worker of the Uniting Church Synod should be escalated.
- If a person who has been at the site is a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 and you are notified
 - Contact Queensland Health by telephoning 134 COVID to seek advice from public health officers on workplace procedures to be put in place.
- If the confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case is treated and transported by paramedics or requires immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital it is a notifiable incident.
 - A notifiable incident needs to be reported to Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (WHSQ), telephone: 1300 362 128.
- Any records of a notifiable event to WHSQ need to be retained for a minimum of 5 years from the date it was reported to WHS Queensland
- In the event that there is a confirmed case of COVID-19, Queensland Health will be notified by the medical professional who confirms the diagnosis.

Looking after yourself

- Hosts and attendees are to stay informed via the communication issued from the Synod office, Church Council or Presbytery Standing Committee.
- If working remotely or without internet access, ensure you maintain contact with your Church Council to be made aware of updates.

Related documents

[Synod Wide Work Health and Safety Policy Statement](#)
[C/1.3 Critical Incident and Issues Escalation Policy](#)



Definitions

Term	Meaning
COVID-19	Novel coronavirus formally named SARS-CoV-2. The clinical disease state resulting from an infection with SARS-CoV-2 is known as COVID-19. COVID-19 is highly transmissible from person-to-person and readily spreads to close contacts of infected individuals.
Physical distancing (or social distancing)	To keep space between yourself and other people outside of your household as one way to slow the spread of viruses, such as coronavirus. This requires to stay, where possible, 1.5m from other people, not to gather in groups, and avoid crowded places and mass gatherings.
Volunteer	A person who, in a church activity, is rostered for a duty, involved in running the activity, and/or directed to perform specific tasks other than to join in communally.

Revisions

Document number	D/1.1.14				
Version	Approval date	Approved by	Effective date	Policy owner	Policy contact
5.0	28.07.2020	General Secretary	28.07.2020	COVID Coordinator	COVID Coordinator
Next scheduled review	28.07.2021				



Re-commencing

This is a list of items to consider before reopening your hall or meeting rooms.

- Area Capacities
Do you know the size of the house? The area is required to be able to calculate the number of attendees at a single time. The distancing rules (4m² per person) are not enforceable within a private residence but will contribute significantly to a safe meeting for the host and attendees.
- Cleaning Regime
Has the host developed a cleaning regime? The host should consider:
 - *Wiping down the entry and exit door handles regularly (leaving entry doors open whilst attendees arrive will reduce the touch points),*
 - *Cleaning sanitizer handles and taps, and*
 - *Cleaning the toilet facilities regularly.*
 - *Refer to guidelines from WorkSafe Australia (see attached)*
- Hand Sanitizer Locations
Where has the host placed hand sanitizer. Hand sanitizer should be placed in easy to access locations within the residence.

Reviewing a Safety Management Plan

This is a list of items to consider and ensure are addressed before providing approval to a host to recommence meetings in homes.

- Area Capacities
Has the host considered the space to be used and whether it can provide physical distancing?
- Cleaning Regime
Does the safety plan include a cleaning regime? Does it consider:
 - *Wiping down the entry and exit door handles regularly,*
 - *Cleaning sanitizer handles and taps, and*
 - *Cleaning the toilet facilities regularly.*
 - *Refer to guidelines from WorkSafe Australia (see attached)*
- Hand Sanitizer Locations
Has the host provided hand sanitizer? All attendees entering and exiting the home should have access to hand sanitizer.
- Area Layout
Does the safety plan address how the host will be setting up for their activities?



Attachment B: Routine Cleaning

Purpose

This is a summary document for the cleaning requirements during COVID-19 within the Church setting. This does not replace the need to be familiar with cleaning requirements as published by government authorities outlined in the additional resources section.

6. Scope

All UCAQ controlled properties except in health-care; community care services setting; commercial kitchens or cafes. Specific cleaning information applies to the exempted settings and government guidelines should be followed.

7. Routine cleaning

8. Do workplaces (includes Church and halls) need to be cleaned after use?

- Yes, routine cleaning must occur after use on each day, and between multiple groups (e.g. between services). Most surfaces for routine cleaning can be cleaned with detergent and warm water.
- Frequently touched surfaces or visibly soiled (e.g. tabletops, door handles, light switches, desks, toilets, taps) should be cleaned more frequently and disinfected. You may be able to do a 2-in-1 clean and disinfection by using a combined detergent and disinfectant.

9. When do I have to disinfect items?

- For routine cleaning, disinfectants are usually only necessary if a surface has been contaminated with potentially infectious material or is a frequently touched item.

10. What products should I use?

- When cleaning it is best to use detergent and warm water.
- Disinfectants that contain greater than or equal to 70% alcohol, quaternary ammonium compounds, chlorine bleach or oxygen bleach are suitable for use on hard surface. These will be labelled as 'disinfectant' on the packaging.
- If using a store-bought disinfectant, choose one that has antiviral activity, meaning it can kill viruses. This should be written on its label. Alternately, diluted bleach can be used following the manufacturer's instructions.

11. How do I clean?

- Use the following steps to clean an environment:
- Wear gloves when cleaning. Gloves should be discarded after each clean.
- Thoroughly clean surfaces using detergent and water. Always clean from the cleanest surfaces to the dirtiest surfaces. This stops the transfer of germs to cleaner surfaces and allows you to physically remove and dispose of the largest possible number of germs.
- If you need to use a disinfectant, clean the surface first using detergent then apply a disinfectant or use a combined detergent and disinfectant. A disinfectant will not kill germs if the surface has not been cleaned first. Apply disinfectant to surfaces using disposable paper towel or a disposable cloth. If non-disposable cloths are used, ensure they are laundered and dried before reusing.
- Allow the disinfectant to remain on the surface for the period of time required to kill the virus (contact time) as specified by the manufacturer. If no time is specified, leave for 10 minutes.
- Disposable cloths are preferable. If using reusable, washable cloths, and other items that can be laundered, they should be washed in a regular cycle wash using the warmest possible setting with normal washing detergent. Avoid shaking out the items before placing in the washing machine.



	Routine Cleaning	Following suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case
Soft plastics	Damp dust + detergent	Detergent + disinfectant
Hard plastics	Detergent	Detergent + disinfectant
Metal surfaces	Detergent	Detergent + disinfectant
Painted metal surfaces	Detergent	Detergent + disinfectant
Wood	Damp dust + detergent	Detergent + disinfectant
Laminate	Detergent	Detergent + disinfectant
Glass	Detergent	Detergent + disinfectant
Leather	Clean according to manufacturer's recommendations	Clean and disinfect according to manufacturer's recommendations
Fabric	Vacuum (HEPA); damp dust + detergent; if launderable, wash on warmest possible setting according to manufacturer's recommendations with laundry detergent	Detergent + steam clean
Carpet	Shampoo or steam clean annually	Carpet shampoo + steam clean
Floor	Damp mop with detergent	Detergent + disinfectant
Tiles / concrete	Detergent	Detergent + disinfectant
Electronic equipment / touch screens	Consider adding a wipeable cover to the device / screen. Refer to manufacturer's recommendations. Isopropyl alcohol-based wipes / sprays	Detergent + disinfectant on wipeable covers. Isopropyl alcohol-based wipes / sprays.

3. Suspected or Confirmed case of COVID-19 in the workplace

- Follow the advice of the public health officials.
- The workplace will need to be thoroughly cleaned **AND** disinfected before people can return.
- Using an ISO accredited cleaner is not required.

4. Related documents

[Safe Work Australia - cleaning to prevent the spread of COVID-19](#)

[Safe Work Australia - COVID-19 cleaning checklist](#)

[Australian Department of Health coronavirus cleaning in the community](#)