**How to keep up to date with COVIDSafe changes?**

The Bishops and Archdeacons will be making regular contact with ministry units. Updated versions of the COVIDSafe plan and circulars can be access at any time on the [Diocesan](https://anglicancg.org.au/keep-connected/) website.

For government information, go to [NSW Health](https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/diseases/Pages/coronavirus.aspx) or [ACT Health](https://www.health.act.gov.au/).

**Can we hold a church service?**

Yes, if we observe all the government regulations. A maximum of 50 (excluding service organisers) in NSW or 100 (including service organisers) in the ACT are permitted. It is important that, prior to commencing, a COVIDSafe plan has been developed and a copy is supplied to ADS [business.support@anglicands.org.au](mailto:business.support@anglicands.org.au)

Recommencing services is a decision for the Rector and the Wardens. There is no requirement to recommence services on or by a specific date. We still need to be mindful of those in our churches in the high-risk category (e.g. those over 70 and those with a compromised respiratory system).

**How do I calculate the maximum capacity of a room?**

The maximum capacity of a room is the total area of the room that is accessible to the public in square metres divided by four. For more detail, see the attachment in the COVIDSafe plan template.

**What about other activities besides church services?**

There are no longer restrictions preventing a church or church facilities being open to the public. Other gatherings are permitted provided the limits on the number participants are observed and a COVIDSafe plan is in place.

**Can we have multiple groups of 50/100 meeting on our property in different spaces?**

Yes, the limitations apply per gathering on the premises. You can have 2 or more such gatherings simultaneously, provided they are kept separate and you keep separate records for each and apply the 4m2 rule.

**Can we sing?**

Currently the NSW government has indicated that congregational singing should not occur in church services. While no such instruction has been issued by the ACT government, we ask that congregational singing be delayed until we have received further advice on how singing might be included in COVIDSafe plans.

**Can we celebrate the Lord’s Supper?**

Yes, if you do not share a common cup and you observe appropriate hygiene measures.

**Can we have morning tea/supper/meals?**

Yes, but you must ensure that there is at least 4 square metres of space for each person.

The maximum permitted number of people that may participate in a morning tea/supper or meal gathering will depend on whether it is part of the religious service or something separate. If it is part of the service, the maximum permitted is the lesser of up to 50 (NSW) / 100 (ACT) persons or the number calculated by the 4ms rule. If the gathering is not part of the service, up to 20 persons can participate,

Food service must be done hygienically, maintaining social distancing and other guidelines.

**What about gatherings in households?**

Up to 20 people are permitted to visit a household at any one time (outside of the exceptions mentioned above).

For these gatherings, please consider the following:

* Requiring people not attend if they are feeling unwell or exhibit any COVID related symptoms
* Encourage people not to attend if they are in a high-risk category (e.g. over the age of 70 or with a pre-existing medical condition)
* Encourage good hygiene and reduce the chance of infection by
  + Providing access to hand-washing and/or hand sanitiser.
  + Minimising the need to open doors and touch surfaces.
  + Having one person allocated to serve food and drinks with appropriate precautions (e.g. gloves and tongs).
  + Encouraging people to bring their own water bottle.
  + Setting up the room to allow 1.5m between people.
  + Having clear signage for areas of the house you don’t wish people to enter (to minimise the need for cleaning after the meeting).
  + Cleaning frequently touched areas and surfaces before and after the gathering.

**Can wardens and parish council meet in person?**

Yes. Best practice is currently to use telephone or Zoom for essential meetings where practical.

**Can we recommence ministry with children and young people?**

Yes.  The maximum number of participants you can have will depend on whether the activity constitutes a religious service (50 in NSW, 100 in ACT) or a class or organised event (20 persons).

Youth and children’s gatherings can be run on church property in multiple groups of up to 50 / 100 people, allowing for at least 4m2. Since the limits apply to per gathering it might be possible to run two or more gatherings in different buildings on your site. You would need to stay within the limits for each gathering, ensure the gatherings stay separated and keep separate attendance records for each gathering. For example, a youth group of 40 and a children’s group of 40 can run concurrently in 2 distinct spaces, allowing for at least 4m2, with staggered start and end times.

All youth and children’s gatherings should follow their COVIDSafe plan specifying the following:

* Designate the internal and external spaces that each gathering will used.
* Record and store the contact details of those who attend.
* Clean the surfaces of the defined space after each gathering.
* Avoid corporate singing.
* Communicate the arrangements and guidelines with Parents/Caregivers.
* Set up spaces and activities that enable 1.5m physical distancing to occur by all participants (children and adults). This includes:
  + - Implement drop-off and pick up procedures that minimise the opportunity for adults to congregate together.
    - Enforce 1.5m distancing especially for concentrated times of communication (e.g. small groups) and adult to adult interactions (e.g. leaders’ meetings).
    - Avoid playing games with physical contact.
    - Wipe down all balls, equipment and toys used at the end of the gathering. You may choose to rotate equipment when running consecutive gatherings.
    - Provide little children with enough space to play and clear spots for them to sit when required.
    - Communicate the practice of physically distancing verbally and visually regularly with young people.
    - Designate the internal and external spaces that the gathering will use.
    - Follow the room limits as determined by the wardens.
    - Restrict the swapping of phones and devices between all participants.
    - Avoid handing physical objects such as Bibles and handouts and money.
    - Distribute food hygienically, maintaining social distancing.
    - Require participants to bring their own water bottle

The decision to re-launch face to face meeting should carefully consider the resources required to run the ministry and clean the property as well as the potential financial cost of ‘deep cleaning’ the space if required.

Youth gatherings of up to 20 people can be run in households. Whilst there is no 4m2 rule for gatherings in homes, 1.5m social distancing should be practised. There should be a minimum of 2 adults present at all times and record and store the contact details of those who attend.

**Can we recommence SRE in NSW?**

Yes. The NSW Department of Education announced on June 11 that face to face SRE can resume from the start of term 3 (20 July 2020).

**Does the Diocese carry insurance that covers us if all our hall bookings are cancelled?**

There is no business interruption insurance protection under the Diocesan (AIRS) Insurance Program to compensate parishes for loss of rental income due to their inability to lease or rent premises due to the current COVID-19 pandemic. If a parish has a COVID-19 incident, raise an [ISOPro incident](https://www.isopro.info/Anglicare/Public/PAP.aspx?fmid=28) and the Insurance Manager will contact you.

**I have another question that that is not covered here?**

For any further enquiries please contact ADS Risk and Compliance:

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