



CoVID19 UPDATE # 1: March 18, 2020

In the context of the increasing complexity and rapidly changing expectations relating to Australia's response to the spread of CoVID19, the Seventh-day Adventist Church (NNSW) Ltd will commence a weekly (and if required more frequent) UPDATE.

This UPDATE will be sent with 3 main focus areas: General Update, Pastors and Staff Update and Church and Members Update information. It will be in a simple Word document format to allow easy cut and paste into existing communication processes.

It is the Pastor's express task as the designated 'Responsible Person' on each site, to ensure this communication sharing happens in a timely manner the day of each UPDATE release.

General UPDATE

1. The novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) is a strain of coronavirus in humans which first appeared in Wuhan city in Hubei Province, China.

Those infected range from having little or no symptoms to others who, due to the 'high risk' categorizations of old age or other comorbidity issues, are severely ill.

The symptoms may appear in as little as 2 days after exposure to as long as 14 days.

Symptoms can include:

- Fever
- flu-like symptoms, such as coughing or sneezing
- difficulty breathing, which may develop into pneumonia
- sore throat
- fatigue

2. In the interest of public safety and wellbeing, to protect the vulnerable and on the clear advice from numerous medical professionals, it is strongly **recommended** that local churches across the Conference close their doors due to the increasing threat of the coronavirus from this Sabbath (21 March 2020) until the end of April.

3. The Federal government has the responsibility for establishing and enforcing travel bans and quarantine expectations.

4. NSW Health COVID-19 Flu assessment clinics are up and running across the state. These clinics are currently assisting with the assessment and testing of people with fever, cough or flu-like symptoms who are returning travellers or have had contact with a confirmed case. For the location of these clinics refer to this link [COVID-19 clinics](#).

5. Everyone should practice social distancing as it reduces the potential for transmission. We understand that this is an unprecedented decision but the health and wellbeing of member, visitors and employees remains our top priority.



Pastors and Staff Update:

Please ensure you:

- Use deescalating language with your staff and church communities to aid in maintaining broader calm and common sense.
- Promote good hygiene
- Stay aware of Federal and State Government advice.
- Share this UPDATE with stakeholders
- Assess and regularly check the NSW Health updates as listed on their website: [https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Notification Protocols](https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/NotificationProtocols)
- If a church or staff member has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or is a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19, they will be notified by NSW Health. The public health unit can provide information to your group about the appropriate response.
- If you are feeling unwell or display any coronavirus symptoms, self-isolate and consult your doctor.

Further:

1. All overseas and domestic flight travel has been cancelled / postponed until further notice. This will be reviewed regularly, and UPDATES provided. *EG service requests, preaching appointments*
2. All non-essential indoor gatherings of 100 or more participants are now cancelled / postponed until further notice. *EG: Concerts. This will be reviewed regularly, and UPDATES provided. **But as of today we recommend local churches close until the end of April.***
3. Where small groups do continue, apply appropriate common sense, hygiene and social distancing strategies.

Arrangements:

- Communicate clearly and often to your members that your church/es will be closed at least until the end of April
- Arrange for written notices to be placed on the front doors of your church/es including alternate arrangements for house groups and a contact phone number
- Encourage your members to meet and worship in family units and/or small groups in homes
- Utilise your elders and deacons to lead out in the small groups
- Suspend communion services
- Encourage your members to continue to give tithes and offerings through eGiving or at a central location/s (all monies should be receipted as per normal).
- Consider events such as funerals and weddings that may be organised in your church. They may need to be limited to close family and a video link option provided for extended family.
- It is generally recommended by General Practitioners that visitation of the sick in their home constitutes a very high risk and it is recommended that supportive phone calls and face time calls can be just as comforting.
- Potluck / Communion and Meal trains should be suspended immediately.

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Church and Member Update:

If you show signs of cold and flu like symptoms

- Stay home and self-isolate until symptoms pass.

If you show the broader signs of Coronavirus

- Immediately make an appointment to be tested
- Whilst being tested and awaiting results, please stay away from your Church family, congregation and small groups.

If a positive test is confirmed

- You will need to self-quarantine for the required period.

If you are returning from overseas travel, where you left Australia before March 15, 2020.

- All returning from overseas travel will also be asked to self-isolate until their period of isolation mandated by the government is complete.

Small Groups

- Small groups in the home using the health and hygiene protocols are encouraged
- Utilise deacons and elders to lead out in these small groups.
- We encourage the use of eGiving as opposed to handling cash in these environments.

The Conference is committed to supporting the local churches and its members and friends. We will continue to operate and welcome any inquiries.

*"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." **Philippians 4:6-7***

Blessings

Last updated 18 March, 2020