

COVID-19 TASMANIA FAQs

AS AT JUNE 22, 2022



Face masks are no longer required to be worn at indoor or outdoor events – these are now optional unless the organisation hosting the event requires them to be worn.

Quarantine/isolation requirements continue for people who test positive to COVID-19 and their close contacts.

Covid-safe plans are still recommended to be maintained by all venues, including churches.

COVID-SAFE BEHAVIOURS for Individuals

The State Government recommends the following 8 behaviours to remain COVID-Safe:

1. BE FULLY VACCINATED
2. WEAR A MASK WHEN NEEDED
3. STAY AT HOME IF YOU ARE SICK
4. IF YOU HAVE COVID SYMPTOMS – GET TESTED
5. USE CHECK-IN TAS (where still required).
6. STAY UP-TO-DATE AND FOLLOW ALL DIRECTIONS
7. KEEP YOUR HANDS CLEAN
8. MAINTAIN 1.5m SOCIAL DISTANCE WHEREVER POSSIBLE

It is recommended that all Tasmanians carry their COVID-SAFE KIT whenever leaving home, containing four essential items: Tissues, Hand Sanitiser, Facemasks, Check-in TAS app.

What should all Church Councils already be doing?

- Review and activate your COVID-19 Safety Plan and/or [Outbreak Management Plan](#).
- Encourage people in your setting to wear face masks.
- Continue to encourage COVID-safe behaviours including physical distancing, hand hygiene, advising staff and visitors to stay at home if unwell, and covering coughs and sneezes.

And if you become aware of a positive case who has attended recently:

- Advise any contacts you may identify to quarantine at home and follow the [quarantine instructions](#).
- Communicate with your staff and contractors about the case or outbreak to ensure they monitor for symptoms and get tested if symptoms develop.

COVID-19 in the workplace

There is no specific guidance for places of worship, however the following advice for businesses and workplaces should be followed as closely as possible. For members, visitors and volunteers, Synod recommends that you encourage people to take similar precautions and actions where possible.

A business may find out a worker has tested positive in some instances from Public Health. If the worker is still in the workplace, they must be directed to go home. They will be required to isolate for a minimum of 7 days from the day they had the test. Workplaces should advise all other staff to monitor for symptoms and get tested if symptoms develop and isolate until they get a negative test result.

To assist in keeping all Tasmanians safe, workplaces should ensure all staff and volunteers continue to practice COVID Safe behaviours including wearing masks where required, practicing hand hygiene and advising staff and volunteers to avoid having meal breaks and meetings together in enclosed spaces. Employers should encourage vaccination for all staff and volunteers – including a booster.

The following will apply to all businesses:

- Staff and volunteers will not be identified as close contacts in the workplace unless they have had household like exposures to cases being longer than 4 hours and without wearing a mask.
- Businesses and workplaces will not be listed as exposure sites.
- Public Health will only be in contact if several cases are linked to your premises or event

Where the confirmed case is a staff member, please notify the Synod Safety Officer elnura.dulakovic@victas.uca.org.au. If the case needs to be reported to WorkSafe Tasmania, Elnura will manage this process for you.





Public Health response to a confirmed case of COVID-19 (individuals)

Since Monday May 2, 2022, 'close contacts' no longer need to quarantine for seven days.

Close contacts - those who live in the same household as confirmed COVID cases - are still required to take daily rapid antigen tests, wear masks when in indoor spaces outside of the home, advise their workplace and avoid aged care homes and hospitals. They are required to test and isolate immediately should they develop symptoms.

When someone is diagnosed with COVID-19, they become a 'confirmed case'. A confirmed case is someone who has a positive COVID-19 Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) or a positive PCR.

The care you need will be available if you receive a positive COVID-19 result. If you have a positive PCR you will receive a message if your result is positive. If your RAT is positive you need to register [the result](#) to access services.

You will need to help with contact tracing, to identify people who may be close contacts and need to be tested or quarantined to prevent further spread of the virus.

The Department of Health will be able to talk to you about your symptoms, any medical conditions, your home situation and the support you have available. They will help decide if you can isolate at home until you are well and no longer at risk of infecting others, or if you need to isolate somewhere with a lower risk and/or more medical support.

Positive cases will be advised to tell their workplace they have tested positive for COVID-19 so information can be provided to other staff.

Most fully vaccinated people will only experience mild illness with symptoms such as a fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose, fatigue, shortness of breath, or loss of taste and smell.

Key steps taken to manage a confirmed case or outbreak of COVID-19 include:

- **isolating the case (even if vaccinated) and organising appropriate, safe medical care**

- **identifying and quarantining close contacts of the case – these are your household contacts or anyone who has spent more than 4 hours in a residential situation. Read more about [what to do if you test positive for COVID-19 checklist](#).**
- **continuing widespread testing within the community to identify further cases**
- **encouraging Public Health social measures such as social distancing, hand hygiene, optimising ventilation and staying at home when unwell.**

CURRENT COVID-SAFE SETTINGS

The following COVID-19 requirements currently apply in Tasmania:

- **Face Masks** are no longer required to be worn in airport terminals, but are still required on board all aircraft in Australia. Travellers should therefore carry a face mask at all times.

As of June 25, masks are no longer required in schools, early childhood centres, or on public transport, however some public transport providers and child care centres (for staff and parents only) may still require masks to be worn based on individual risk assessments.

From July 1, the requirement to wear face masks in all other remaining settings such as hospitals, residential aged care facilities, disability providers and correctional facilities will be based on individual organisational risk assessments for each of these settings.

Facemasks will still be required to be worn by close contacts when they are in indoor settings outside the home.

Although not mandatory, mask wearing is still strongly recommended in airport terminals and other indoor settings - such as church services and activities including vulnerable people - especially where physical distancing is not possible.

- **Gatherings including Religious gatherings** at churches, places of worship, memorial events and funeral services may accommodate 100 per cent of seating capacity,
In unseated areas, such as a foyer, it is strongly recommended that a maximum of one person per two square metres of floor space continue to be observed.

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- **Weddings** There is no limit to the number of people permitted at a wedding at a church or a commercial or public venue (including a public park) however, it is still recommended to maintain 1.5m physical distancing where possible or to encourage the wearing of face masks where physical distancing is not possible, and to continue to observe all other basic Covid-19 precautions.
- **Gatherings in private homes** are limited to up to 100 people whether indoors and/or outdoors, including residents, children and babies.

HOW WILL WE KNOW ABOUT FURTHER UPDATES?

Regularly check the latest government advice available at: <https://coronavirus.tas.gov.au/families-community/current-restrictions>

IS PHYSICAL DISTANCING STILL RECOMMENDED?

In any gathering or setting it is important to maintain:

- physical distancing of at least 1.5 metres between people
- hand hygiene
- respiratory hygiene (sneeze or cough into your elbow or tissues, and clean your hands after coughing or sneezing)
- frequent environmental cleaning and disinfection.

CHECK-IN TAS

Contact tracing and the use of the Check-in TAS app is currently not required.

Visitor screening is still being undertaken at certain high risk settings such as residential aged-care and hospitals. If you have been relying on the Check-in TAS app for your proof of vaccination, find out other ways you can store proof of vaccination on your device at [Vaccination status and evidence](#).

GATHERINGS

What must we have in place to help manage the risk in all public venues, including churches and community halls etc?

- there must be a COVID contact person for every event or venue
- a COVID-19 Safety Plan must be used at all events and venues
- the event organiser (or contact person) must be ready to present the COVID-19 Safety Plan to an authorised officer immediately on request
- everyone at an event or venue must maintain at least 1.5 metres distancing between themselves and other people, whenever possible
- information must be collected to support rapid contact tracing if required
- Maximum capacity posters (based on one person per 2sqm) must be displayed in all non-seated areas, including entry foyers, halls, kitchens etc.

Gatherings in private homes: limited to up to 100 people (including children and babies) at any one time. This limit includes all residents of the household and the people who ordinarily reside at the house. The household gathering limit of 100 people applies whether the gathering is indoors or outdoors, and for all types of gatherings, including barbecues and celebrations. You should not visit others or have visitors to your home if you are unwell.

Is singing permitted at gatherings?

There is no restriction in Government Health advice on communal singing. Normal venue limits and gathering size limits apply.

The most important preventative measure is for singers and musicians to not attend worship, rehearsals or performances if they are unwell or have any symptoms.

When rehearsals and performances are conducted, performers should:

- Remain 1.5 metres apart wherever possible
- Strictly follow hand hygiene practices
- Avoid sharing microphones or instruments that are played with a mouthpiece.
These areas should also be cleaned with increased frequency.





Can food & drink be served at Weddings, Funerals, Religious Gatherings & Community Halls?

Food and drink services may be provided (whether self-catering or privately catered for) in the context of a wedding, funeral or religious ceremony or gathering providing all cleaning and social distancing guidelines can be met.

Caution must be exercised if you intend to share food, including adherence to the guidelines which can be found in Section D "Kitchens" in the Recovery Checklist at:

<https://victas.uca.org.au/download/668/faq/8852/recovery-acton-plan-checklist>

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/all-you-need-to-know-answers-to-your-frequently-asked-questions>

As of 01/05/2021

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

- If you 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 Hirer Agreement <https://victas.uca.org.au/resources/property/forms-and-resources/> 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.

- For current State Government Directions for the management of premises, refer to <https://www.coronavirus.tas.gov.au/business-and-employees/covid-19-safe-workplaces-framework>

- If in doubt, seek advice from your presbytery or contact uca.legal@victas.uca.org.au.

As of 25/06/2020

MARKETS

Can we hold garage sales and/or markets?

Markets and garage sales may operate, and should follow these simple guidelines:

- Customers should keep 1.5 metres in between them and other people who are not part of their household
- If the garage sale is being held at a private residence, then household visitor limits would apply

As of 10/12/2020

HOLY COMMUNION

How can Holy Communion services reflect COVID safe practices?

Careful consideration should be given to how Holy Communion can be conducted appropriately, including maintaining distance, hygiene and not sharing communion ware.

For congregations livestreaming worship, the Assembly guidelines remain in place until May 2022 and can be found at: <https://www.assembly.uca.org.au/news/item/3163-temporary-arrangements-for-holycommunion>

For some thoughts on how to conduct Holy Communion in a COVID-safe manner read Rev Dr Sally Douglas' November 2020 article at <https://victas.uca.org.au/how-can-we-keep-holy-communion-covid-19-safe/>.

As of 12/01/2022

