

## Coronavirus (COVID-19)

**5<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

The following is a statement from Director of QB Service – Stewart Pieper on behalf of QB, in relation to the Coronavirus situation.

“The spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) has become a cause of concern. We have had a number of enquires as to how churches should be responding to this potential threat. Below is some information adapted from State and Federal Health authority web sites that might be of assistance to you as you seek to care for your church community”.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness caused by a new virus. Symptoms range from a mild cough to pneumonia, including fever, flu- like symptoms such as coughing and a sore throat, and shortness of breath.

Some people recover easily, others may get very sick very quickly. There is evidence that it spreads from person to person through:

- close contact with an infectious person
- contact with droplets from an infected person’s cough or sneeze
- touching objects or surfaces (like doorknobs or tables) that have cough or sneeze droplets from an infected person, and then touching your mouth or face

### **Prevention:**

Surgical masks in the community are only helpful in preventing people who have coronavirus disease from spreading it to others. If you are well, you do not need to wear a surgical mask as there is little evidence supporting the widespread use of surgical masks in healthy people to prevent transmission in public.

Everyone should practice good hygiene to protect against infections. Good hygiene includes:

- washing your hands often with soap and water
- using a tissue and cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze
- avoiding close contact with others, such as touching
- You should also try and stay at least one metre away from people coughing or sneezing.

### **Diagnosis:**

If you become unwell and think you may have symptoms of coronavirus, seek medical attention immediately. Call ahead to make an appointment with a doctor. Tell your doctor about your symptoms, travel history and any recent close contact with someone who has coronavirus. If you must leave home to see your doctor, wear a surgical mask (if you have one) to protect others. Avoid contact with others until a diagnosis is made then follow medical advice.

**Treatment:**

If you have been diagnosed with coronavirus, or are awaiting a diagnosis, isolate yourself in your home.

**How to isolate yourself:**

- Do not go to public places, such as work, church, school, shopping centres, childcare or university. If possible, ask other people to get food and other necessities for you and leave them at your front door.
- Only people who usually live with you should be in your home. Do not let in visitors.
- You do not need to wear a mask in your home.
- If you need to leave home to seek medical attention, wear a surgical mask (if you have one) to protect others.

**At this stage there is no need to cancel any events or gatherings or take additional precautions to normal practice. However, people who are unwell should not attend public events such as church services.**