

Queensland Baptists COVID-19 Update 25 March 2020

This is a trying time for our communities and with a significant growth in the number of COVID – 19 cases in Australia, we saw Prime Minister Scott Morrison last night announce moving Australia to Stage 2 of restrictions, effective from 11.59pm (local time) today 25 March 2020.

This action has been foreshadowed, and so in addition to the previous updates provided, we now confirm further measures in regard to weddings and funerals:

- Weddings with a maximum attendance of no more than 5 people (just the couple, the celebrant and the witnesses) and where the 1 person per 4 square metre rule applies.
- Funerals attended by a maximum of no more than 10 people and where the 1 person per 4 square metre rule applies.

We encourage churches to continue monitoring [QLD Health](#) for further directives that pertain to our State. At this stage no further updates have been posted, but this may change in coming hours/days.

We are also pleased to be able share some positive information in relation to our new ways of doing church. There had been some query in terms of live streaming from church properties and if this was permissible. We have been provided with a QLD Health circulation that states:

This can be attributed as Queensland Health advice:

“The Chief Health Officer’s public health direction is for the protection of the public noting that there is a higher risk of transmission in large groups in small spaces.

Live streaming from a venue where people are not contravening the mass gathering bans or recommendations for social distancing, (i.e. where lesser numbers of people are working indoors) should not be an issue.

In these small group settings, such as those outlined below, it becomes the same as a workplace where good personal hygiene and social distancing are key.

It is important for the community to still have access to their support networks in these challenging times. So, as long the production of live streaming is done in a way that does not unnecessarily put the people involved at risk, it will be supported.”

I would stress the need for keeping that distance and good hygiene at all times during live streaming given you are inside with a group for a significant period of time.

Small group setting is 2-10 people and the 4m squared rule applies in this setting.

We also take this opportunity to update you on content contained in yesterday’s FAQ in relation to [CCLI](#) licensing that we now have further advice on. There are in fact 2 CCLI licenses, that when combined enable a church to live stream a whole service from their premises (CCLI live stream licence) and record a service for their congregants that cannot attend (CCLI copyright licence). We do apologise for any confusion caused by this and thank you for your grace and understanding.

Outside of focusing on church operations, we reiterate the broader restrictions announced that we are all called to follow:

- The highest priority should be placed on social isolation measures as well as strict and rapid contact tracing of individuals.
- Australians should stay at home, unless shopping for essentials, travelling to and from work (where you cannot work from home), going to school and exercising.
- Keep visitors to your home at a minimum - no groups, functions, parties, extended family celebrations etc.
- In outdoor spaces do not congregate in groups

Let us as a body of believers continue to draw nearer to God, remembering Romans 8:26 *"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans"*

May God's peace that transcends all understanding be with you always.