

Queensland Baptists COVID-19 Update 12 January 2021

Overnight we saw the release of the [Restrictions for Impacted Areas Direction \(No.2\)](#), and now provide a summary of this information to assist churches with their planning for the next 10 days, after which we hope to see a further easing of restrictions from 22 January.

For the avoidance of doubt, this Direction pertains to the **impacted areas** of:

- Brisbane City Council
- Ipswich City Council
- Logan City Council
- Moreton Bay Regional Council
- Redland City Council

The Industry Plan for Places of Worship remains pending for updates, but we are advised that where an Approved Plan refers to a requirement that is different to a requirement in the Direction, the requirement in the Direction prevails to the extent of any inconsistency.

Occupant Density

As restricted businesses, Places of Worship must operate in accordance with the following:

Indoors

- no more than one person per 2 square metres (up to a maximum of 50 people) for indoor venues or spaces of 200 square metres or less; or
- no more than one person per 4 square metres for indoor venues or spaces over 200 square metres; or

Outdoors

- no more than one person per 2 square metres for outdoor venues or spaces.

Face Masks

Requirements of the Direction relating to face masks apply to persons:

- in the **impacted areas**; or
- who have been in an **impacted area** at any time from 7.00am 2 January 2021 unless 14 days have passed since the person was last in an **impacted area**.

Persons listed above must:

- carry a face mask at all times; and
- wear a face mask covering the nose and mouth at all times if they:
 - are on public transport infrastructure or at public transport infrastructure (e.g. when on a train or waiting for a train); or
 - are in a commercial passenger vehicle or waiting in a designated outdoor space that is not a residence for a commercial passenger vehicle (e.g. waiting for a taxi at a taxi rank, waiting for a rideshare at a designated pick-up area).; or
 - are in an indoor space; or
 - are entering, exiting or inside a Major Sports Stadium, unless the person is seated; or

- have any symptoms consistent with COVID-19; or
- are required to do so in accordance with any other Public Health Directions in effect under section 362B of the Public Health Act 2005; or
- are directed to do so by an emergency officer (public health).

There is an extensive list in paragraph 33 of the Direction for where mask wearing is not required. Please see below for a few circumstances of notable interest for places of worship:

- if the nature of a person's work or education means that clear enunciation or visibility of the mouth is essential e.g. teaching, lecturing, learning, or live broadcasting;
- a person being married while in the process of being married.

On the basis of the above, we suggest that masks are not mandatory while preaching or delivering a church service as long as physical distancing is maintained. We would encourage churches to consider this in relation to worship teams, ensuring that if singers are not wearing masks that they are appropriately physically distanced.

A person who removes their face mask under the circumstances listed in paragraph 33 of the Direction must resume wearing the face mask as soon as practicable after the circumstance ends.

Further information can be found in the [Mandatory Face Masks Direction](#)

Weddings and Funerals

Despite occupant density restrictions, weddings and funerals are limited to a maximum attendance of 100 people.

Dancing is permitted at weddings.

Contact information required

Contact information means information that is:

- the name, phone number, email address or a residential address if an email address is unavailable, and the date and time period of attendees and staff; and
- securely stored, not used for any other purpose; and
- deleted after not less than 30 days and not more than 56 days.

NB: businesses must take reasonable steps to ensure that the contact information collected is accurate, and if requested, this information must be provided to a public health officer within a stated time.

There is no mandate for places of worship to collect information electronically – this is still only required for retail food services and entertainment venues.

Frequently asked questions

Do I have to wear a mask while attending a funeral or wedding?

You must wear a face mask when you are in indoor spaces. You are strongly encouraged to wear a mask when in outdoor spaces when you cannot physically distance.

These rules also apply for weddings and funerals. At weddings the couple getting married does not have to wear a mask while getting married if indoors. Photos can be taken without the bridal party or guests wearing masks.

Do I have to wear a mask when I dance at a wedding?

Other than the bride and groom, you are required to wear a mask when dancing indoors and you cannot physically distance.

Do we need to physical distance?

QLD Health are also asking everyone to keep a physical (social) distance of 1.5 metres away from other people. Groups from different households can sit together and there is no need to maintain distancing between people from the same household.