



20 April 2020

Dear Church Family,

This is **issue #7 (seven)** of regular Corporate communication. This communication supersedes previous issue #6 (six) and has been edited. Please note also that updates are highlighted in **yellow**.

Undoubtedly, the immediate change we are seeing and experiencing is in the way we are interacting with one another and running our daily business and ministries. An important note we would like to highlight is that in terms of ongoing support, services and ministry, our church is **not** closed. The organization continues to function and run as usual, albeit in a very different way to which we are all used to. Please be encouraged that we will still remain connected as a church family.

The Prime Minister, Scott Morrison has addressed the nation on multiple occasions. The Government has implemented measures to try and combat the pandemic that we are facing in Australia at the moment. These additional measures will temporarily change the way that we go about our day to day business. We would like to reiterate that we support these measures for the sake of the Nation's / World's Health.

We understand that all church members in the community will experience isolation, so please make sure that you remain in contact with your family, friends and church members via phone and internet sources.

### How does this affect our churches?

1. The physical location of our churches are closed
2. Churches and other places of worship will be considered places of work so that services can be livestreamed to the community.
3. Livestreaming is permitted providing only essential staff are present, the venue/facility remains closed to the public and social distancing principles are maintained. To ensure that we remain socially responsible, we request that a maximum of 4 people only participate in this activity.
4. Sabbath church services will be accessible online only. Please visit your local church website for details.
5. The Government guidelines issued, have given us a clearer understanding around the use of churches for weddings and funerals.  
We would like to reiterate that the church, as a physical building, has been closed for the use of public gatherings.  
Prime Minister Scott Morrison advised that churches may be used for Wedding and Funeral services with strict guidelines as they have been identified as major transmitting events.
  - No more than 5 people including the celebrant and the four square meter rule applies as does social distancing
  - Funerals can be conducted but with no more than 10 persons observing the rules around the four square metre rule and the social-distancing practices

### Seventh-day Adventist Church (South Queensland Conference) Limited

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# Seventh-day Adventist Church™ South Queensland

- Outdoor venues and grave sites are also an option and we would encourage services to be live streamed where possible

6. As per local Government directives no small private group gatherings should occur or private transport outside your own suburb. As a result, we will not be able to physically meet in the homes of our fellow church members. Instead, churches are encouraged to meet together for bible studies and worship services via zoom and skype meetings.
7. Non-essential church member contact is to remain via phone calls, emails, social media sites and via zoom or skype sessions.
  - a. Church members identified as requiring **essential** face-to-face contact with their pastor, must follow the guide below:
    - i. Pastor to confirm that a visit is necessary via phone call
    - ii. Pastor to confirm with church member that they are healthy and no fever
    - iii. Church member to confirm that they and all other family members in the house are healthy and have no fevers
    - iv. Pastor to make home visit but to remain 1.5m outside front door
    - v. Pastor to follow hand hygiene procedures after departure.

**As of today, Queensland's total confirmed cases of Coronavirus is 1019.**

In response to the continuous rise in Coronavirus cases, Queensland borders were closed from midnight 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Anyone travelling into Queensland will be required to self-quarantine for 14 days, regardless if they are sick or not.

The South Queensland Conference supports decisions made by both Federal and Local Governments and encourages its church members and staff to follow the General Precautionary Standards, which include:

- washing your hands often and thoroughly with regular soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- using a tissue to cover your mouth or cough and sneeze into your elbow
- avoiding close contact with others, such as touching and shaking hands
- Discard used tissues in a bin or bag immediately and wash your hands immediately
- Don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- Frequently clean and disinfect regularly used surfaces and public areas, such as hand rails, door handles and benches
- Maintain social distance at all times with a distance of at least 1.5 meters between yourself and the next person (for public interactions)
- Stay home, self-quarantine and call your doctor if you feel unwell

Let's continue to pray for each other and the rest of the Nation as we move through this difficult time and play our parts in minimizing the risk of spreading COVID-19. Here in South Queensland we remain committed in ensuring that our church members are cared for and spiritually supported. Our staff are working tirelessly at keeping us connected as a church family, ministering to all of our churches in regional areas as well as city, even if it does look different.

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## **Schools update**

The Queensland Government has announced that from 20 April 2020, Queensland students will be moving to a learning at home model for the first five weeks of Term 2. During this period all students who are able to learn from home should do so. From the start of Term 2 until 22 May 2020 inclusive, all students will be learning from home, except students in the following categories:

- Children of essential workers on days when they are not able to be supervised at home and no other arrangements can be made. Essential worker means any working who must continue to attend their workplace for essential business during this time.
- Vulnerable children include children identified by schools or who are currently receiving services from Child Safety, including children who are subject to a child protection order, children who are subject to a youth justice order and children in designated Indigenous communities.
- Children in designated Indigenous communities.

On-site supervision, with access to the school's home-based learning materials, will be available at all schools for students in the categories listed above.

Our school leaders and their staff have worked diligently over the last month and are well prepared to action this transition. Advice regarding the model of learning for the remainder of Term 2, 202 will be provided by the Government by 22 May 2020.

Our schools continue to work to ensure the safety of staff considered 'at risk' and to implement workplace practices on site that promote hygiene and social distancing.

## **Aged Care update**

Having already put in place a range of measures to significantly reduce the potential for COVID-19 to reach their sites, the Aged Care team continue to assess their response and consider alternatives to strengthen these protections

At present there have not been any confirmed cases of COVID-19 at our sites. However we remain proactive and focused on prevention. We recognise the impact that this is having on our residents and their family and friends. We are committed to lifting the current measures as soon as it is safe to do so. We now have operating and in place video conferencing which enables our residents to stay connected with loved ones.

We are also focused on what activities we can introduce at all of our locations to assist with the feeling of being 'locked away'. We are exploring several ideas in an effort to connect and assist our residents during this time.

Updates from Eric Anderson, the CEO, continue to be posted on the Adventist Retirement Plus website <https://www.arplus.org.au/news/>.

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## **Conclusion**

SQC has been proactive in these uncertain and difficult times. We appreciate that some of these measures will cause inconvenience and disappointment where expected programs are cancelled. We thank all in advance for your co-operation and understanding as we seek to deal as appropriately as possible with this constantly changing major and serious health threat.

With these comprehensive responses put in place, the SQC will continue to monitor, change and adapt as the virus changes and escalates. The SQC understands that the current situation is fluid and requires extensive monitoring and will update and inform both staff and members as additional information comes to hand and/or additional measures are required in our response.

May we continue to pray together for God's continuing guidance and protection for our church and our community through these challenging times.

Thank you for noting this important notice **and its updates** and following the directions as set by the Crisis Management Team in supporting the recommendations of the AUC.

Yours sincerely  
SQC Crisis Management Team

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