



## Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn

7th August 2020

### **A.C.T. PARISHES**

Please find attached the latest updates regarding Covid-19 restrictions for places of Worship.

From 9am Monday, 10 August 2020 the following changes come into effect.

1. The requirement to display a sign at the entrance of our Churches. The maximum occupancy based on 4 square metres (100 people maximum (excluding Priest and Ministers)).
2. Congregational singing and Choirs are discouraged – or should be minimised where possible. Choir members are to maintain physical distancing of at least 2 metres from each other when singing.
3. Choirs should maintain at least 2 metres from members of the congregation.

All other existing protocols are to be maintained strictly. See current safety plan protocols for the Archdiocese on the Catholic Voice Website [www.catholicvoice.org.au](http://www.catholicvoice.org.au).

Please read the attached document from the ACT Government carefully.

Thank you for your cooperation. We need to be extra vigilant on this matter in these times.

Kind regards,

Kylie



**Kylie Bereza** | Executive Assistant to the Most Reverend Christopher Prowse  
Catholic Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn  
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Dear Proprietor

### **COVID-19 restrictions for Places of Worship – Step 3.1**

Due to the strong support and proactive compliance of the Public Health Directions to date by business and our community will be changes to the COVID-19 restrictions, including the reopening of some sectors that have been closed since March.

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with initial information on what business can expect to see outlined in the next Public Health Direction to support your forward planning.

Today the ACT Government and ACT Chief Health Officer announced that as at **9am on Monday 10 August 2020**, the following changes will come into effect for your sector, under Stage 3, Step 3.1 of Canberra's Recovery Plan:

#### What will change:

- The requirement to display a sign at the entrance to the premises stating the maximum occupancy based on one person per 4 square metres, noting that each indoor and each outdoor space can have a maximum of 100 people (excluding staff).
- Due to recent learnings from other jurisdictions, congregational singing and choirs are discouraged, or should be minimised where possible. Choir members are to be kept to an absolute minimum and are to maintain physical distancing of at least 2 metres from each other when singing.
- Choirs should also maintain a minimum of 2 metres from members of the congregation.

#### What will stay the same:

- The activities must involve gatherings of no more than 100 people in each indoor and each outdoor space (excluding the celebrant and the professional wedding photographer) or one person per 4 square metres, whichever is lesser.
- Have a visitor book where attendees can provide their first name and contact phone number, along with the date and time at which the person attended.
- It is a requirement to have a COVID-19 Safety Plan, which must be adhered to, and which must be produced when requested by an authorised person.
  - If you have gatherings of less than 20 people you do not need a COVID-19 Safety Plan.

#### Guidance for compliance with Direction

- Need to manage ingress and egress and flow of people throughout the venue.
- Avoid use of collection plates and other shared equipment during services.
- Limit use of books, if possible. If not possible ensure these are cleaned after use.
- There should be 1.5 metres between each group in a service.

- Church leaders and others involved in the service to be kept to a minimum and to be physically distanced from congregation.
- If choirs are performing to congregations, they are to remain at least 2 metres away from the congregation and those involved in the service.
- Try to keep to a minimum number of musicians in each service, and they should remain physically distanced from the congregation or audience. There should also be a minimum of 1.5 metres of distance between each band member.
- Increased frequency of cleaning of high touch areas and restroom facilities.

Ongoing compliance activity:

- Compliance with the current Public Health Direction is critical in supporting community safety. Access Canberra, the Health Protection Service and ACT Policing continue to undertake proactive checks at businesses to support compliance and community safety against the current Public Health Direction.
- Non-compliance with the public health directions can result in regulatory action and serious penalties may apply.

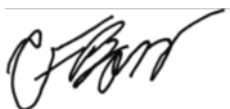
Guidance, next steps, where to get more information:

- Further information is available on the ACT Government's [COVID-19 website](#).
- The Access Canberra Business Liaison Team is available to answer questions or provide advice. The team can be reached on (02) 6205 0900.
- The Public Health Direction which will reflect Stage 3, Step 3.1 changes is expected to be published on 7 August 2020. It will be available [at this link](#).

It's important to note that these changes do not take effect **until 9am on 10 August 2020**. Until this time, the [existing Public Health Direction](#) remains in effect and businesses, industry and community must comply with that direction.

Your ongoing cooperation and proactive compliance with the Public Health Direction is greatly appreciated as we work to support our community's safety and Canberra's recovery from COVID-19.

Yours sincerely



Conrad Barr  
Executive Branch Manager  
Health Protection Service



Emily Springett  
Executive Branch Manager  
Access Canberra



**Catholic Archdiocese of  
Canberra & Goulburn**

## **Archdiocesan Protocols**

*COVID 19*

*Liturgical and Pastoral*

### ***NSW Parishes***

***Effective Friday 24 July 2020***

The NSW Government has updated its restrictions for religious gatherings. Please note the following changes:

1. **Parishes must register** their Churches as a COVID Safe Venue:

[https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-07/covid-19-safety-plan-places-of-worship\\_1.pdf](https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-07/covid-19-safety-plan-places-of-worship_1.pdf)

2. All religious services are **limited to 100 people** at all times or one person per 4 square metres, whichever is the lesser.

Father Anthony Percy  
Vicar General  
24 July 2020



***NSW Parishes***

*Effective Wednesday 1 July  
2020*

***Eucharist***

1. Masses are to be celebrated ***respecting the 4sqm per person rule*** (excluding clergy and liturgical ministers).
  - a. Communion in the hand only.
  - b. Sacred Host, not the Precious Blood, to be offered.
  - c. No touching at the sign of peace.
  - d. No collection plates are to be used, but money/envelopes placed at collection points.
  - e. 4sqm per person rule
    - i. Seating
    - ii. Standing
    - iii. During the Communion Procession
    - iv. During the movement to place money/envelopes at the collection points.
  - f. Hygiene practices
    - i. Sanitisation of hands before entering the church
    - ii. Wiping down of pews and common areas at conclusion of Mass.
    - iii. Priest and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to purify hands with sanitiser before and after offering Holy Communion.
    - iv. Limit the use of books. Ensure they are cleansed between use.
  - g. Register of people upon entering the church
    - i. Name
    - ii. Phone number and/or email
    - iii. To be kept in safe place (respecting privacy laws) for 28 days for chief medical officer.



## Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn

### *Funerals*

2. Please note: **effective Monday 15 June 2020**
3. 4sqm per person rule applies (excluding clergy and liturgical ministers). Funeral directors to keep register of people who attend.

### *Weddings*

4. 4sqm per person rule applies (excluding clergy and liturgical ministers). Parish to keep register in accord with 1(g).

### *Baptism*

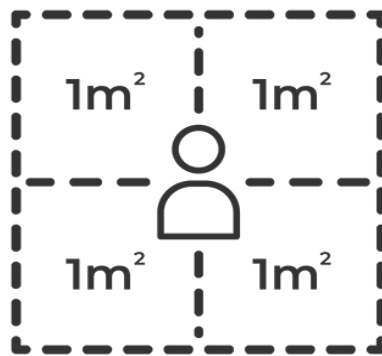
5. 4sqm per person rule (excluding clergy and liturgical ministers).

### *Penance*

6. First Rite of Penance, with priest and penitent respecting the 4sqm per person rule.
7. Second Rite of Penance to be celebrated with 4sqm per person rule (excluding clergy and liturgical ministers).

### *Prayer and Social Gatherings*

8. 4sqm per person rule applies, whether inside Church or other Church facility.





***ACT Parishes***

*Effective Friday 19 June 2020*

***Eucharist***

9. Masses are to be celebrated with ***no more than 100 people***, respecting the 4sqm per person rule (including priest and those involved in liturgical ministries).
  - a. Communion in the hand only.
  - b. Sacred Host, not the Precious Blood, to be offered.
  - c. No touching at the sign of peace.
  - d. No collection plates are to be used, but money/envelopes placed at collection points.
  - e. 4sqm per person rule
    - i. Seating
    - ii. Standing
    - iii. During the Communion Procession
    - iv. During the movement to place money/envelopes at the collection points.
  - f. Hygiene practices
    - i. Sanitisation of hands before entering the church
    - ii. Wiping down of pews and common areas at conclusion of Mass
    - iii. Priest and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to purify hands with sanitiser before and after offering Holy Communion
    - iv. Limit the use of books. Ensure they are cleansed between use.
  - g. Register of people upon entering the church
    - i. Name
    - ii. Phone number and/or email
    - iii. To be kept in safe place (respecting privacy laws) for 28 days for chief medical officer.

***Funerals***

10. No more than 100 people, respecting the 4sqm per person rule (including clergy and liturgical ministers). Funeral directors to keep register of people who attend.



## Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn

### *Weddings*

11. No more than 100 people, respecting the 4sqm per person rule (including clergy and liturgical ministers). Church to keep register of people who attend in accord with 9(g).

### *Baptism*

12. No more than 100 people, respecting the 4sqm per person rule (including priest and those involved in liturgical ministries).

### *Penance*

13. First Rite of penance, with priest and penitent respecting the 4sqm per person rule.
14. Second Rite of penance to be celebrated with no more than 100 people, respecting the 4sqm per person rule (including priest and liturgical ministers).

### *Prayer and Social Gatherings*

15. No more than 100 people whether inside Church or other Church facility, respecting the 4sqm per person rule.





**Catholic Archdiocese of  
Canberra & Goulburn**

***NSW & ACT Parishes***

*Effective immediately*

***Communion to Sick and Elderly Persons***

16. Normal pastoral practice resumes. Communion to sick persons in hospitals, aged care homes and private homes.

***Anointing of the Sick***

17. Normal pastoral practice resumes. Anointing of the sick in hospitals, aged care homes and private homes.
18. If the person has *COVID 19*, please consult the Vicar General.
19. Hospital rosters resume in the ACT.

***First Penance, First Holy Communion & Confirmation***

20. Normal pastoral practice resumes, respecting liturgical and pastoral protocols.

*Father Anthony  
Percy Vicar General  
16 June 2020*