



25 March 2020

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) health alert](#)

Australian Government

Department of Health

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Limits on public gatherings for coronavirus (COVID-19)

Venues where a large number of people are in one place can increase the risk of spreading viruses. Find out what limits apply to public gatherings to help stop the spread of COVID-19.

Why these limits are important

There is evidence that COVID-19 has started to spread in Australian communities.

We are unable to do widespread COVID-19 testing so it's important to apply other measures at this early stage.

These limits help to prevent the spread of COVID-19. They are especially important for at risk people, such as people over 60 and those with chronic conditions.

Non-essential gatherings

We are suspending non-essential gatherings to reduce the risk of spreading coronavirus (COVID-19). This will give both businesses and people time to fully understand social distancing requirements.

The following facilities were restricted from opening from midday local time 23 March 2020:

- pubs, registered and licensed clubs (excluding bottle shops attached to these venues), hotels (excluding accommodation)
- gyms and indoor sporting venues
- cinemas, entertainment venues, casinos and night clubs
- restaurants and cafes will be restricted to takeaway and/or home delivery
- religious gatherings, places of worship or funerals (in enclosed spaces and other than very small groups and where the 1 person per 4 square metre rule applies)

From 12:00am on 26 March, these restrictions will extend to the following facilities:

- food courts (except for take away)
- auction houses, real estate auctions and open houses
- personal services (beauty, nail, tanning, waxing and tattoo salons)
- Spa and massage parlours, excluding health related services such as physiotherapy
- amusement parks, arcades and play centres (indoor and outdoor)
- Strip clubs, brothels and sex on premises venues.
- galleries, national institutions, historic sites and museums
- Health clubs, fitness centres, yoga, barre and spin facilities, saunas, bathhouses and wellness centres and swimming pools
- community facilities such as community halls, libraries and youth centres, RSL and PCYC
- Gaming and gambling venues
- Indoor and outdoor markets (excluding food markets). States and territories will make their own announcements about this.

Weddings can be conducted with no more than five people, including the couple, the celebrant and the witnesses. The 4 square metre rule and social distancing must be observed.

Funerals must be limited to no more than 10 people. The 4 square metre rule and social distancing must be observed.

Hairdressers and barbers can continue to operate under strict new rules. The four square metre rule and social distancing must be observed. Clients must also not spend more than 30 minutes inside the premises.

Bootcamps and personal training can be conducted outdoors with no more than 10 people and social distancing observed.

Hotels, hostels, bed and breakfast, campsites, caravan parks and boarding houses will be a decision for each state and territory.

These measures also apply to outdoor spaces associated with the above venues.

The health advice on schools has not changed and the [Australian Health Protection Principal Committee \(AHPPC\)](#), does not recommend that schools be shut at this time. Some states may end their first term early.

If parents choose to keep their children home from schools that are open, they must be responsible for their children's conduct and make sure they adhere to social distancing.

States and territories are making decisions regarding schools based on local circumstances. Visit your state or territory government website for more information.

Essential gatherings

Essential gatherings must restrict the number of people present to:

- 500 for **outdoor** gatherings
- 100 for **indoor** gatherings

Essential indoor gatherings

An indoor gathering takes place within a single enclosed area (a single room or area).

Essential activities include:

- essential workplaces

- health care settings
- pharmacies
- food shopping
- schools and universities
- public transport and airports

These essential indoor gatherings must apply social distancing and good hygiene practices, including:

- being able to maintain a distance of 1.5 metres between people
- providing hand hygiene products and suitable rubbish bins, with frequent cleaning and waste disposal

Aged care facilities

Special restrictions remain in place for aged care facilities to protect older Australians.

Public transport

Public transport is essential and, at this stage, the 100 person limit does not apply. This will be reviewed regularly.

Always use appropriate social distancing and hygiene practices when travelling on public transport.

Non-essential travel is to be avoided.

Essential outdoor gatherings

Essential outdoor events of less than 500 attendees can proceed. All must follow these rules:

- Consider the size of the space, the number of people in it, and how much room people have to move around safely — people must be able to keep 1.5 metres apart.
- Make hand hygiene products and suitable rubbish bins readily available.
- Conduct frequent cleaning and waste disposal.

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