
To the congregation of Brisbane Christian Fellowship – from the Presbytery:

At the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Victor Hall received advice with respect to interfacing with the relevant authorities in matters pertaining to COVID restrictions. In his capacity as overseer, in relation to the presbytery, and as president of Brisbane Christian Fellowship Inc. (BCF), in relation to the executive of the management committee, he asked Bruce Hamilton to be the point of contact with the Queensland Government, on behalf of the presbytery and BCF.

Following recent changes to COVID-19 restrictions and to the *Industry COVID Safe Plan for Places of Worship in Queensland – Stage 3, Version 4* (the Plan), Bruce then sought some clarification regarding the application and implications of those changes, with regard to gatherings in homes, particularly as they relate to what the Plan defines as Home Worship.

On Thursday, 15 October, Bruce received clarification regarding gatherings in homes, from the Queensland Department of Health (the Department), via a government representative in the office of the Hon Steven Miles, Deputy Premier | Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services.

The Health Department has said that they ‘understand there has been some confusion and anxiety within faith communities about what this step-down in restrictions means for them, while ensuring compliance with health directives, especially as it relates to home worship activities.’

The Department has also said that ‘feedback about the inconsistency between home worship density requirements with the latest Movement and Gathering Direction has been recognised and reviewed.’ To continue to address any inconsistencies, Queensland Health is currently working with the lead agency – the Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs (DLGRMA) to make technical amendments to the Plan to ensure it is reflecting the latest relaxations and is consistent with the Roadmap to easing restrictions.

The advice received is that the following key changes which impact places of worship will include:

- Home worship will be consistent with the latest Movement and Gathering Direction which currently allows up to 30 people in your own residence in non-restricted areas. Please note that this number may change as circumstances change.
[NOTE: it has been announced that from 4pm on Friday, 16 October 2020 this limit will increase to 40 people]. While it is proposed to increase in later stages of the Roadmap, it may be selectively/locally decreased in the case of an outbreak of COVID-19 which occurred in Brisbane earlier this year. The Movement and

Gathering Direction should be followed to guide the maximum number of people allowed at home worship activities.

- People wanting to use their home residence as a place of worship and wish to exceed the maximum number of people allowed under the latest Movement and Gathering Direction (currently 30 people) will have to abide by all aspects of the Industry Plan.

For the BCF congregation, this means that prayer gatherings and house to house fellowship gatherings in homes may proceed in accordance with these guidelines.

The updated Industry Plan for Places of Worship will be published here:

<https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/government-actions/approved-industry-covid-safe-plans>.

However, any new announcements on the www.covid19.qld.gov.au website as it relates to any step-up or step-down in COVID-19 restrictions should be considered the point of reference.

An email from DLGRMA has also been sent to the faith community to advise of these changes.

All of the preparations, plans, and procedures for our Communion gatherings at Samford, which commenced from Sunday, 23 August, are in full compliance with *the COVID Safe Industry Plan for Places of Worship in Queensland – Stage 3*.

Under these measures, Brisbane Christian Fellowship is able to continue to meet at our Samford property on the condition that it continues to comply with *the COVID Safe Industry Plan for Places of Worship in Queensland – Stage 3*.

We continue to maintain contact with the Queensland Government through the Office of the Hon Steven Miles, Deputy Premier | Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services and we have confirmed this latest advice directly with them. Following written and verbal advice from a spokesperson for the Queensland Government, we are now communicating that advice to you.

It is still important that we all remain vigilant in all of our procedures, distancing, and hygiene standards.

We will continue to monitor the situation and will communicate further with you as may be required.

Queensland Government

COVID-19 update

Friday, 16 October 2020

We also continue to remind you of the Queensland Government Health advice to the whole community –

To prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Stay home if you are sick
- If you have any [COVID-19 symptoms](#), no matter how mild, [get tested](#)
- Stay 1.5 metres away from other people—think two big steps
- Wash your hands with soap and water, or hand sanitiser
- Leave a location if it is crowded.

If you have any concerns about your health, contact your doctor or contact [13 HEALTH \(13 43 25 84\)](#).

To protect others, you must:

- [practise good hygiene](#)
- practise [physical distancing](#)
- follow the [limits for public gatherings](#)
- understand how to [isolate](#) if you need to

On behalf of the Presbytery and BCF,



Bruce Hamilton.