

Dear Religious Leaders

I would like to thank you for your ongoing support of the efforts to control COVID-19. I recognise the uncertainty and distress that COVID-19 is placing on religious communities. I ask that, at this time, all leaders carefully consider the health advice to prevent the transmission at religious gatherings.

Places of worship are high risk settings for COVID-19, based on the experience here and overseas, particularly when there is group singing. There have been several clusters of COVID-19 in New South Wales in recent weeks, including a cluster linked to a choir at a church and attendance at a variety of activities related to a funeral.

Group singing or chanting is particularly high risk and should not take place at this time. This applies to both the congregation and the choir.

The [Public Health Order](#) was amended on 24 July 2020. The Public Health Order requires high risk settings for transmission, including places of worship, to [register themselves as COVID-Safe](#) with the NSW Government, and to comply with a [COVID-19 Safety Plan](#).

Places of worship must ensure that the maximum number of persons on the premises does not exceed 100 people or one person per four square metres of space (excluding staff), whichever is the lesser. For further information on the requirements, please see:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/industry-guidelines/places-of-worship>

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K Chant".

Dr Kerry Chant
Chief Health Officer
29 July 2020