

THE SERVICE BOARD OF NORTHERN AUSTRALIA

15 June 2020

Easing of Restrictions Around Coronavirus

Physical distancing measures are still in place across Australia. However, Queensland and Northern Territory governments have revised their restrictions on public gatherings. Before reopening meetings, members should check their State or Territory websites for the relevant legislation and guidelines for where your meeting is located.

The situation will continue to change and vary between States and Territories and so the Service Board cannot be prescriptive on when and how to reopen meetings. Please ensure that you continue to communicate with, and respect the requirements provided to you by your venue owners. It is essential that we continue to act to protect our members and the wider community.

The Service Board offers the following information and suggestions that your Group Conscience may wish to discuss and consider.

Consider General COVID Safety advice:

- stay 1.5 metres away from other people whenever and wherever we can
- maintain good hand washing and cough/sneeze hygiene
- stay home when you are unwell, and get tested if we have respiratory symptoms or a fever
- download the COVIDSafe app so we can track the virus quickly, and
- Develop COVID safe plans for workplaces (meeting venues and group members)

Group members should pay particularly attention to and be careful that restrictions are followed rigidly as there are severe penalties in place for non-compliance.

We have created a *Sample COVID19 Safety Planning Document* to help you plan your reopening with your home group members and venue. All groups will need to adhere to any requirements that the venue may have regarding cleaning and social distancing, in addition to what is required by the local authorities. Groups may want to consider having a combined physical and zoom meeting to enable those still vulnerable to attend their regular meetings.

You may be asked by your venue owner to keep a detailed record of who has attended the meeting, including names, addresses, etc. While some will be concerned about their anonymity, we are anonymous at the public level. We do not feel that this is outside the spirit of our tradition of anonymity, as these details would need to be provided to the health authorities only in the event of an infected member attending a meeting. This is not an anonymity breach.

While our Fourth Tradition states that each group is autonomous, it is qualified with, “except in matters affecting other groups or NA as a whole”. If we do not follow the requirements of each State and Territory when reopening, this could affect NA as a whole, and possibly draw NA into public controversy and affecting our adherence to Tradition Ten. Each group should decide their own course of action via an informed group conscience and with the spirit of our Traditions in mind.

If you open a meeting, you will have to comply with the conditions set by the venue owner and restrictions required by the government. It is the decision of each group as to whether to re-open a meeting and the decision of each member whether to attend the meeting. If you feel that you cannot meet the Government or venue requirements, then you should continue to meet online.

Yours in Service

NORTHERN AUSTRALIA SERVICE BOARD