

# Covid-19 Safe management plan

V28, 15 December, 2021

We thank God for his grace and mercy upon NSW and our church throughout the Covid pandemic. Our priorities as a church have been unchanged through this crisis:

- To **honour God** in all we do, seeking to grow Christians spiritually, and continue to share the gospel of hope and joy.
- To **continue ministry**, but in necessarily new and adaptive forms. Our priority is faithful preaching of God's Word.
- We recognize that **fellowship and unity** are important, but to be nurtured in safe ways.
- The Bible instructs Christians to **gather** together as a church. Ideally, this is in person.

This Covid-19 Management Plan forms the policy by which our church will operate our activities during the Covid period. The plan is updated regularly, as per government directives, and all members (especially leaders and coordinators of events) must comply with these rules.

WSCCC has been registered with the NSW Government as a Covid Safe Organisation.

## The current status

We have been blessed by God that our NSW health system is currently coping with the Covid situation. However, it is **uncertain how extensive the emerging Omicron variant** will be. Its effects seem to be more infectious but milder in severity, and people are protected by a booster (3<sup>rd</sup> dose) vaccination.

As a church, we continue to be guided by NSW Health guidelines and regulations. As a general rule, we:

- Encourage vaccination of all attendees.
- Attention to good hygiene and risk minimisation.
- Respond seriously to potential exposures.

Under the NSW Health guidelines and this WSCCC Covid policy, we believe it is safe for people to attend services and ministries in our church on site.

## Church services

Our Sunday services have resumed on-site worship at their regular times and locations (the 8:45am Strathfield Cantonese service, resumes in January 2022).

We encourage all to return to gather for church services on site, as Christians gathering is what God commends. However, understandably some people are not ready to return. Therefore some congregations will still offer on-line services in various forms:

| Service           | Location    | Ongoing online services |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Cantonese 10:30am | Strathfield | YouTube livestream      |

|   |              |  |
|---|--------------|--|
| Cantonese 8:45am<br>(from 9 <sup>th</sup> January 2022) | Strathfield  | Shared with 10:30am service            |
| Mandarin 10:00am  | Croydon Park | YouTube recording                      |
| Mandarin 10:30am  | Strathfield  | Zoom service                           |
| English 9am   | Strathfield  | YouTube livestream                     |
| English 4:30pm  | Strathfield  | Shared with 9am service                |
| English 10am  | Croydon Park | Sermon recordings available on website |

## QR code registration

All people visiting the church site **must still register with the QR code** scan. Temperature checks are not required.

## Vaccination

All people are allowed and welcome to join us on-site for church services, **regardless of vaccination status**. Vaccination status will not be requested at church. Nevertheless, we encourage all to be fully vaccinated, and obtain booster shots when due.

However, leaders of activities at WSCCC hold a special responsibility for the welfare of our attendees. During this pandemic, we must act in the interests of others, and minimise any chance of exposing our attendees to Covid. Therefore, **all people serving in ministry should be fully vaccinated before re-commencing activities which involve face to face interaction**. It is particularly important that children and visitors can join us confidently knowing that our leaders have been vaccinated. This is a loving and considerate gesture to the vulnerable.

Full vaccination is therefore required for safe ministry in our church in the following roles: pastors and staff, deacons, service leaders, Bible study leaders, Sunday school teachers and helpers, music team and choirs, welcoming teams, food preparation and any other church activities which involve leading and serving in face-to-face capacities.

## Hygiene measures

### *People at risk*

Symptomatic people should not attend church, out of consideration for others. They are encouraged to obtain a Covid swab, and when cleared, return to church. The symptoms are fever, cough, sore throat, loss of smell/taste, or flu-like lethargy.

People who have been deemed close contacts with Covid risks, or come from designated hot spots should not attend, until cleared by NSW Health.

### *Singing*

**Congregational singing is now allowed, and masks not required to be worn during singing.**

### *Masks*

Attendees are **no longer required to wear masks** at church. Masks are not required even when congregation is singing. Nevertheless, some people may choose to wear masks, especially when indoor.

However, the church requires the **following people to wear masks**:

- Welcoming team/ushers.
- Those serving food (morning tea or meals). They are also required to wear gloves.
- Those preparing food on site (church kitchen).

#### *Distribution of items*

- Holy Communion can be conducted, and for now, we will continue to use **pre-packaged elements** served by servers wearing mask and gloves.
- Shared **reusable items should not be passed around**, including church Bibles and offering bags. Offerings should be made electronically or via a box at the rear of each hall.
- Bulletins and literature (single use) may be distributed.

#### *Baptisms*

- Baptisms may take place but not with water reused from a previous candidate.

#### *Food service*

- **Food may be cooked and served on site**. Food should be prepared by a designated team with strict adherence to Covid hygiene standards as well as the church's Food Handling guidelines.
- Food must be cooked and served by **designated servers** who are wearing appropriate PPE (mask and gloves). There is not to be help-yourself tables of food or drink unless items are pre-packaged.

#### *Cleaning*

- The church premises will be thoroughly cleaned by our church cleaners at least weekly.
- If there has been a Covid case in church, the premises will be thoroughly cleaned, and subject to advice from the Department of Health, be closed for a period. All affected people will be informed and advised.

## Maximum capacity

The NSW government **no longer applies limits to the number of people allowed on site** (no longer 1 per person per 2 sqm). Therefore normal capacity is allowed for all activities.

## Staff working location

Church staff should start planning to return to work on site at church from the beginning of 2022, for accessibility and accountability to the congregations.

## Rules for external bookings

- All external bookings require special approval by the whole Diaconate (not ad hoc by individual deacons or pastors), and will be considered on a case-by-case basis at the monthly Diaconate meeting. Other booking conditions apply (as per church guidelines).

- All bookings are tentative only, pending changes in Covid restrictions and our church's internal ministry requirements. The church will endeavour to honour approved bookings, and we will seek to provide at least 2 weeks' notice of cancellation (but Covid regulations may be more rapid).
- External organisations will be responsible for Service NSW QR code registrations, not the church, although the WSCCC QR code will be available.