

The Hon. Brad Hazzard, MP
Minister for Health and Medical Research
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001
Sent via email

3 June 2020

Re: Covid-19 Public Health Order Clarification

Dear Minister,

Firstly, on behalf of my members may I congratulate you and the wider Berejiklian Government of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It has been through firm and decisive action that NSW is now in the position to continue the easing of restrictions.

Christian Venues Association is the largest peak body for short term accommodation, conference centres and retreat centres in NSW. By way of example, the majority of schools who go on a camp and do not use one of the excellent Sport and Recreation Centres in NSW would use one of our members' facilities. Beyond this, our members provide a range of holiday programs as well as space for church, recreation and community groups to go for retreats. Research has proven the value of such camps and retreats in the support of recovery from mental distress as well as the extraordinary efficiency of such retreats is creating re-connect in fractured relationships.

It is due to this value that we seek clarification as to our members' ability to again reengage with the community they serve so well.

Therefore, I seek confirmation that we as an industry sector are applying the rules and guidelines that have been provided by you appropriately.

With reference to Public Health (COVID-19 Restrictions on Gathering and Movement) Order (No 3) 2020 I note that:

1. Caravan parks are open without limit provided they provide a COVID-19 safety plan;
2. Camping grounds are open without limit provided they provide a COVID-19 safety plan; and
3. Hotels and accommodation services are open without restriction provided they provide a COVID-19 safety plan.

Additionally we note the announcement of June 2nd, and kids sport and community sports competition for those 18 years and under from July 1st, 2020.

Our members' campsites and facilities can be regarded as a blend of the above. They commonly provide hotel-type rooms, cabins like in a caravan park, and spaces for pitching tents. As a result we would assume that they can open in a similar way.

I further note that under Schedule 2 – Essential Gatherings

Point 12 covers “a gathering at a hotel, motel or other accommodation facility that is necessary for the normal operation of accommodation services at that hotel, motel or other facility”

We interpret this to read that our members facilities are able to, providing that an appropriate COVID-19 safety plan is in place:-

- a. Provide accommodation to groups, regardless of size of said group (e.g. a school year group)
- b. Can provide this accommodation without reference to the 4sqm rule, but ensuring that an appropriate Covid Safe plan is adopted giving due consideration to those who are primarily at risk from this virus and providing mitigation plans for this cohort.
- c. Can provide meals to these groups without the need to provide 4sqm of space for each person present, recognising that these groups primarily are derived from an existing cohort (again, as example a school camp from a single school).
- d. Can provide a gathering or meeting space for this group under this Essential Gatherings Clause.

I note that the majority of our guest groups stay for between 2 and 6 nights at these venues – similar to those staying at caravan parks, camping grounds and hotels - and are thus extremely different from such things as Boarding houses that some schools provide.

I would also emphasis that our members client groups are commonly derived from cohorts that are within existing communities (e.g. school year groups) and thus generally could be considered as posing a lower risk of community infection.

I look forward to your response. The sector my association represents has been decimated by this pandemic and are looking forward to the opportunity to again provide the services our community needs. This sector contributes more than \$80,000,000 to NSW economy but is currently in hibernation.

I would welcome further discussion.



Graeme Janes

Chief Executive Officer

Ph 0418228537