



Office of Local Government



COVID-19 COUNCIL UPDATE

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18 January 2021

Guidance to assist councils to organise COVID Safe Australia Day events

The NSW Government is encouraging local councils to hold Australia Day events in a COVID Safe way.



To assist councils to host these events, the Office of Local Government (OLG) is providing guidance about the Public Health Orders and Australia Day events and citizenship ceremonies. More information about exemptions to the Public Health Order in relation to Australia Day events can be found in the second article below.

Council venues such as town halls and libraries are not captured by the Orders that relate to masks, so there is **no legal requirement** for masks to be worn in those premises.

However, to minimise the risk of community transmission the NSW Government strongly recommends participants in indoor gatherings, particularly in Greater Sydney, to wear masks, where practicable. In circumstances where clear communication is required, such as the reciting of an oath or pledge, they can take off their mask.

If a ceremony or event is not held on council premises then councils should seek and be guided by their own advice about whether wearing a mask is mandatory.

The NSW Government also strongly recommends the use of the Service NSW QR code for public registration at all council Australia Day events.

In relation to group singing at Australia Day events, councils are directed to [this advice](#) on the NSW Government website particularly about social distancing and directionality of singers (see 'hospitality venues, events and musical activities' and 'group singing'). This advice applies to all councils (not just in Greater Sydney) given the relative risk of transmission associated with group singing.

The Office of Local Government will host a webinar this Wednesday January 20 from 11:00am-12:00pm for council general managers and senior staff with health and police officials to provide up-to-date advice about Australia Day. Invitations to the webinar were sent to councils by email earlier today.

Councils can direct any questions to their OLG Council Engagement Manager.

Exemptions to the Gathering and Movement

Order on Australia Day

Councils are advised that exemptions to the Gathering and Movement Public Health Order have been put in place and apply to all council Australia Day events and citizenship ceremonies **held outdoors** on January 26.



The exemptions include:

- The maximum number of attendees must not exceed 500 people. This does not include persons engaged in work on the Premises
- There must be a nominated organiser for the event
- The nominated organiser must implement measures to prevent crowding and ensure appropriate physical distancing of people waiting to enter and leave or waiting to use amenities
- The nominated organiser must take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure that persons do not attend the event if they display symptoms consistent with COVID-19, or they have been to a location on a date and time that NSW Health has issued a self-isolation and get tested immediately alert
- The nominated organiser must ensure that hand sanitiser is available for use by all attendees and that all attendees are asked to use it upon arrival and on departure
- The nominated organiser must keep an electronic record of the name, contact number and entry time for all staff and attendees for a period of at least 28 days. Use of a contactless electronic method, such as the Service NSW QR Code or similar is strongly encouraged
- The nominated organiser must comply with all other relevant requirements in the Order and develop and comply with a COVID-19 Safety Plan.

For more information on the exemptions click [here](#).

Information and resources

NSW Health has provided a range of materials in relation to the wearing of face masks. Councils are encouraged to use these materials in their local communities.



The following materials are available:

- Posters and signage
- Mandatory mask wearing - social media tiles and factsheets
- Do's and don'ts of mask wearing - poster, social media tile - do's, social media tile - don'ts
- How to wear a mask safely - videos

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