

## Funerals with more than ten people are not allowed under strict new controls to stop coronavirus.

Sorry Business and other cultural activities are very important. But it is more important at the moment to keep Elders — and others who are already ill — safe by not holding gatherings of more than a few people.

The Federal Government has banned large indoor and outdoor gatherings to prevent the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), and this includes sorry business and family gatherings such as wakes.

Travel restrictions are also in place across Queensland, so people will not be able to travel to attend gatherings.

### Talk to families early

Talk to the family as early as possible about different ways to hold the service and burial. This may even include considering very difficult options such as:

- restricting funerals and services to immediate family
- some members of the family attending the service and others attending the burial
- holding only a small funeral — with memorials, processions and tombstone openings for the wider family and community at a later date.

These new mandatory measures are being applied to everyone in Australia to help reduce the spread of coronavirus.

### Other ways to support families during Sorry Business

Saying goodbye to loved ones when they pass away is important. Councils can support families by sharing other ways to conduct Sorry Business. Families can:

- send messages of condolence to screen at the funeral
- hold small memorial services in their own community at the same time as the funeral service
- provide copies of funeral programs and/or eulogies
- utilise technology such as smartphones, facetime, skype and/or coordinated memorial services — but also with a localised wake — so people can grieve in a culturally safe way around family and friends.

### Social distancing

Community members should be encouraged to follow health precautions to help protect themselves and the community by practicing good hygiene, self-isolation and social distancing.

What is social distancing?

- Stay at home if you are sick.
- Large gatherings are now banned.
- Keep a distance of 1.5 metres between you and other people whenever possible.
- Minimise physical contact such as shaking hands.

Essential indoor and outdoor gatherings should follow social distancing and good hygiene practices:

- Keep 1.5 metres between people.
- Provide hand hygiene products.
- Provide suitable rubbish bins, with frequent cleaning and waste disposal.

### Help is available

If you — or someone you care about — is distressed, in crisis, suicidal or needs someone to talk to, help is available.

Call:

**1300 MH CALL (1300 642 255)**. This is a confidential first point of contact to public mental health services.

**13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)** for 24 hour assessment, referral, advice, and hospital and community health centre contact details.

### More information

If you would like assistance with organising any of these options, please contact your local Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships office.

[www.datsip.qld.gov.au/regional-centres](http://www.datsip.qld.gov.au/regional-centres)