

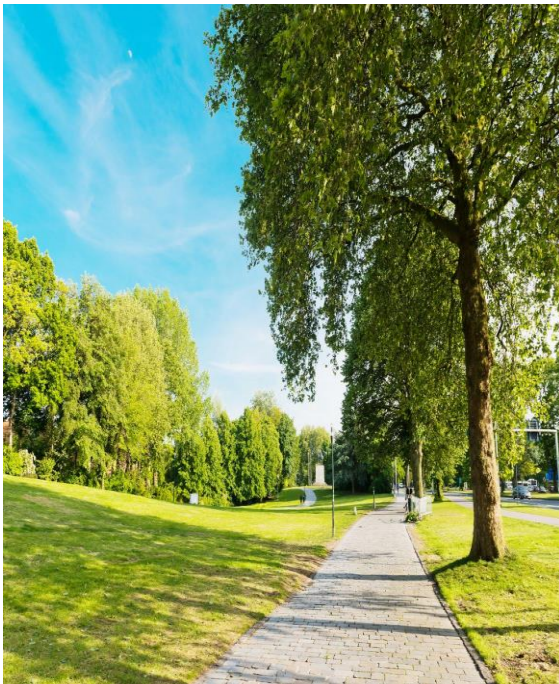
Office of Local Government



COVID-19 COUNCIL UPDATE

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7 April 2020



Management of open spaces over Easter

In the lead up to the Easter long weekend councils are urged to continue to work closely with Police Local Area Commands to support them in enforcing Public Health Orders and maintaining public health and safety generally.

Councils are also reminded of the powers they have to manage public places under their care and control. For example, under the Local Government Act 1993 councils may issue orders, abate public nuisances and/or erect notices that effectively close beaches,

public baths and/or parks where councils have concerns that members of the public are creating public health and safety risks, such as not maintaining social distancing required at this time.

Before closing public spaces or taking other widespread regulatory action across their local government areas, councils should engage with Police Local Area Commands about the specific public health and safety concerns they have leading to their decision to take that regulatory action.



Planning and Assessment webinar now online

Everyone can now listen to the webinar for council general managers held on 30 March.

General managers from across the State participated in the webinar during which they received a briefing from Group

Deputy Secretary Marcus Ray and Chief Executive Local Government Tim Hurst on the latest COVID-19 developments.

Councils also submitted questions which were answered during the webinar. These covered a range of topics including managing planning functions, managing planning proposals and planning instruments, exemptions and change of use provisions and planning panels.

A recording of the webinar can be accessed [here](#).

Frequently asked questions from the webinar will be available online shortly.

Sector survey helping to create safer communities

Since late March OLG has asked councils to complete an online form answering specific questions about their response to COVID-19 and providing an opportunity to raise questions or issues they are grappling with.

**WE WANT
YOUR FEEDBACK**

Many councils have made completing this form a priority, understanding that it allows OLG to collect and respond to the issues raised by the sector, and most importantly to direct the questions to the responsible agency through OLG's participation in the State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC).

Since OLG started collecting the data councils have been able to receive guidance on a wide range of issues raised, including:

- conduct of council meetings
- postponement of council elections
- clarification around the operation of caravan parks and travellers through recent public health orders
- access to social media collateral to advise people to stay at home these holidays and strong government messaging on that theme
- access to webinars with the Minister for Health and the Chief Medical officer

OLG is continuing to work hard on behalf of councils. This work is greatly helped by input from the sector and councils dedicated to the continued provision of services to the community, in a manner that protect both community members and staff and keeps everyone safe.



Stay Home this Passover

Passover begins Wednesday evening and as it is traditionally spent with extended family and friends it is important to remind the community of the need to continue to stay at home.

Social media tiles are available [here](#) for use on your council's channels

reinforcing this message, and we ask councils reinforce to their community:

- COVID-19 spreads in groups, and older people are the most vulnerable
- To keep our loved ones safe, we need our communities to stay home this Passover and spend this special time with their immediate households
- Where you can, try connecting with extended family and friends over the phone or online instead
- By doing this you can help us slow the spread of COVID-19 and together we will save lives
- For updated information about COVID-19, see nsw.gov.au/covid-19

Similar and multilingual messaging will be available soon regarding Easter, Orthodox Easter, and Ramadan.



Information and resources

Older person food delivery fact-sheet

The Commonwealth has announced a range of measures to support older people experiencing difficulty acquiring food and basic household items due to isolation. A fact sheet detailing these measures and more information can be downloaded [here](#).

Online survey reminder

OLG is reminding councils to complete an online survey each day to make it easier to report their needs and issues. Council can access the online survey [here](#).

Data on COVID-19 cases

Councils can access the latest data on the number of COVID-19 cases by local government area and by local health district on the NSW Health website [here](#).

Quicklinks

Councils can access the latest information and resources about COVID-19 on the [NSW Government](#), [NSW Health](#) and [Commonwealth Government](#) and [Commonwealth Department of Health](#) websites. The [Office of Local Government](#) also has a COVID-19 section on its website.

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