

Circular Details	20-17 / 20 May 2020 / A703212
Previous Circular	20-14 <i>Updated guidance on attendance by councillors and others at council and committee meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic</i>
Who should read this	Councillors / General Managers / Council governance staff
Contact	Council Governance Team/ 02 4428 4100/ olg@olg.nsw.gov.au
Action required	Council to Implement

Relaxation of some restrictions on the attendance by councillors and staff at council and committee meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic

What's new or changing

- The Minister for Health and Medical Research, the Hon. Brad Hazzard MP (the Minister), made the *Public Health (COVID-19 Restrictions on Gathering and Movement) Order (No 2) 2020* (the new Public Health Order) on 14 May 2020.
- The new Public Health Order removes the “stay at home” direction contained in the earlier *Public Health (COVID-19 Restrictions on Gathering and Movement) Order 2020*.

What this will mean for your council

- It is now permissible for councillors and council staff to leave their homes for the purposes of attending council and committee meetings and to attend meetings in person.
- Councils should continue to allow councillors and staff to attend and participate in council and committee meetings by audio visual links where it is reasonably practicable to do so.
- Members of the public are not permitted to attend meetings (other than for the purposes of work) if this means that the total number of people attending meetings (including councillors and staff) exceed 10.
- Where councils exclude members of the public from meetings, they must livestream their meetings using audio-visual links to satisfy the requirement under section 10 of the *Local Government Act 1993* for members of the public to be permitted to “attend” meetings.
- Councils must not allow persons to attend meetings if the size of the meeting venue is insufficient to ensure there is 4 square metres of space for each person attending the meeting.
- Further guidance on compliance with social distancing requirements at council and committee meetings is provided in Circular 20-09 which is available [here](#).

Key points

- A failure to comply with a direction in a Public Health Order is an offence under Section 10 of the *Public Health Act 2010* that carries a maximum penalty of imprisonment for 6 months or a fine of up to \$11,000 (or both) plus a further \$5,500 fine each day the offence continues.

Where to go for further information

- For further information please contact the Council Governance Team on 02 4428 4100 or by email at olg@olg.nsw.gov.au.
- More information on the new Public Health Order is available [here](#).
- For more specific guidance on compliance with the Public Health Order, contact the NSW Police Force.



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