

Office of Local Government



COVID-19 COUNCIL UPDATE

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29 December 2020



Minister's message following online meeting with health and police officials about New Year's Eve restrictions

I would like to thank the mayors and general managers from councils in Greater Sydney who joined this morning's online conference with health and police officials to discuss restrictions for New Year's Eve in Greater Sydney.

I would especially like to thank Dr Laura Collie, Senior Medical Advisor, Office of the Chief Health Officer; Dr Richard Broome, Acting Executive Director, Health Protection NSW; and Assistant Commissioner Michael Willing of the NSW Police Force for making themselves available to brief councils and answer questions.

No doubt you found the information they provided very helpful in clarifying issues of concern.

I also thank councils in advance for their co-operation and efforts to ensure COVID-Safe events can be held around the State.

This year has brought so many challenges and the Northern Beaches COVID cluster and New Year's Eve are yet another.

I have no doubt councils will rise to the challenge - as they have done consistently throughout the year - and ensure communities remain safe and are able to celebrate the beginning of a New Year and better days ahead in 2021.

Below you can find a summary of the key points from this morning's online conference as well as important information for councils and communities. I encourage you to share this information with all relevant parties.

I would also like to wish you and the communities you serve a Happy New Year.

Stay healthy and safe

Shelley Hancock
Minister for Local Government

Key points from this morning's online conference

- There are three key Public Health Orders:
 1. [Gathering and movement](#)
 2. [Northern Beaches](#)
 3. [New Year's Eve](#).
- While outside gatherings such as picnics are restricted to 50 people in total, multiple gatherings are allowed in large public spaces.
- Councils are not being asked to close parks and public spaces as outdoor gatherings are preferred.
- Gatherings in residential streets are to be treated in the same way as gatherings in parks.
- Police are responsible for enforcing Public Health Orders and additional police resources are being deployed across the Greater Sydney region.
- Penalties include a \$1,000 fine per person in an illegal gathering and a \$5,000 fine for a business breaching COVID rules or failing to have a COVID Safety Plan.



- While councils are not being asked to enforce Public Health Orders, they are encouraged to assist police by:
 1. Liaising closely with their Local Area Command
 2. Nominating one officer to be a point of contact for the Local Area Command, and
 3. Providing officers to monitor gatherings where practical and possible and feed information to police via the nominated officer.
- The NSW Police Marine Area Command is also providing additional resources and councils should liaise with their Local Area Command to establish need.
- The Government is providing messaging to discourage people from travelling to the regions.
- Councils are strongly encouraged to use the [Service NSW COVID Safe Check-in tool](#) where appropriate as it has been specifically designed to support NSW Health contact tracing.



Help us spread the word - free promotional materials

A range of free promotional materials is available on the [NSW Health website](#). Councils are encouraged to use these materials on their own communication channels to promote COVID-Safe messaging in their local communities. The materials include:

- [Fact sheets and brochures](#)
- [Posters and print resources](#)
- [Digital banners and social media tiles](#)
- [Holiday destination resource kit](#)
- [Videos](#).

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