



COVID-19 – COVID PROTECTION FRAMEWORK - UPDATE

April 7 2022

Tena Koutou,

In late March the Government changed the regulations relating to the Covid-19 Protection framework. This changed many of the regulations affecting churches.

Faith Based Gatherings at Red

The Covid-19 page for faith-based gatherings can be found [here](#). The website includes an updated set of guidelines for places of worship (also attached to the email with which this letter was sent).

The key points as they relate to worship gatherings are:

Vaccine Passes:

- The government no longer requires churches to ask for a vaccine pass from those attending worship or other gatherings.
- However, note that churches can still ask for a vaccine pass if they *choose* to.

Gathering Limits:

- Indoor faith-based gatherings are limited to 200 people.
- Outdoor faith-based gatherings have no limit.
- Workers (paid or unpaid) at a gathering — for example, the person leading the service and musicians — are not included in the gathering limits.
- Children and babies are included in the gathering limits.
- At all gatherings, you do not need to physically distance. This means you can move around, and mingle with others.
- Some people may choose to continue to physically distance as their choice; please respect this.

Face Masks:

This is the Government's advice about wearing face masks in faith-based gatherings:

- You must wear a face mask at an indoor gathering if the defined space is shared with other groups or members of the public.
- You do not need to wear a face mask at an outdoor gathering, or when your gathering is the only one using the defined space and other people cannot mix with gathering attendees.
- Where face masks are required, you can remove them to eat and drink. Face masks must not be removed while singing.
- If 2 metres away from others, performers and workers presenting to an audience can remove their face masks.
- All workers (paid or unpaid) at faith-based gatherings must wear a face mask throughout the gathering.
- *N.b. where face masks are not required, some people may still choose to wear them; please respect this*

Serving Food and Drink

- You can serve food and drink at your faith-based gathering, but people should not share drinks, cups, plates, cutlery or other items.
- Unless your gathering is at a hospitality venue, people do not need to sit down to eat or drink.
- Where face masks are required, these can be removed while eating and drinking.

Employment Matters Relating to Vaccine Certificate Requirements

We have requested legal advice on employment matters relating to the changes in vaccine certificate requirements with respect to churches and this will be made available as soon as we have it ready.

The situation continues to evolve so to ensure you are up to date with any changes, keep checking the Government's [Covid-19 website](#).

Yours in Christ,



Phil King
Acting Assembly Executive Secretary