

# COVID-SAFE PLAN: PARLIAMENT HOUSE

EFFECTIVE JUNE 2023  
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## 1. BACKGROUND

Parliament House is located at the corner of George and Alice Streets in the Brisbane central business district and is surrounded by the City Botanic Gardens, the Queensland University of Technology Gardens Point campus and the Brisbane River.

The Parliamentary Service provides a range of activities, programs and services to allow visitors to engage with the Parliament and experience Parliament House.

During sitting days members of the public can view their parliament at work from the Legislative Assembly Chamber public gallery. In addition, public guided tours operate all year round from Monday to Friday.

The Parliamentary Service also offers the following educational services:

- Seminars, workshops, conferences and Youth Parliaments for educators, senior secondary school students, university students and public servants.
- Tours for primary and junior secondary school students.
- Online educational and information resources for use in educational institutions and by the wider community.
- Parliamentary Internship Program, which provides university students with the opportunity to undertake a nominated research project under the supervision of a Member of Parliament or senior officers of the Parliamentary Service.

Parliament House also offers a variety of function services and dining experiences available to visitors and the public which can be pre-booked in advance.

## 2. CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

The Queensland Parliament will operate in accordance with this **COVID-Safe Plan: Parliament House** for the duration of the COVID-19 epidemic or as otherwise instructed by public health officials.

### 2.1 General conditions of entry for Visitors

Standard conditions of entry for visitors to the Queensland Parliament have been updated to include a number of COVID Safe strategies including:

- Pre-booking is required for all visits other than public tours and public gallery attendance on sitting days.
- Contact information including name, email address and phone number is required upon entry for all visitors. Alternative arrangements apply for formal school tours.
- Visitor numbers and occupancy limits are based on the most current public health authority advice and state government guidelines.
- Hygiene and safety signage will be on display.
- Visitors who are feeling unwell are asked not to attend the precinct and those with visible symptoms may be refused entry to the precinct and/or restricted from participating in any public gathering events.
- All visitors (other than school tour groups) to the public gallery, committee hearings, Public Service Seminars or public tours must agree to cloak room storage of personal

belongings. Arrangements have been made to ensure that hygiene requirements are applied to the service. The service is optional for all other visitors. Visitors with individual needs are welcome to discuss requirements with reception staff on arrival.

- Use of bathrooms and parent rooms will be restricted to small numbers. Visitors with special needs will be given priority.
- Visitors who do not abide by these Conditions of Entry may be asked to leave the precinct.
- These Conditions of Entry, including COVID-19 Health and Safety conditions, are displayed on our entrances and are available online at [www.parliament.qld.gov.au](http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au).
- We reserve the right to change our Conditions of Entry at any time.
- By entering the Queensland Parliament visitors agree to these Conditions of Entry.

Online and printed booking material will be updated to reflect revised Conditions of Entry.

### School Tour Groups

For school groups participating in official parliamentary tour programs, it is a condition of entry that representatives from the visiting school maintain individual contact details for the tour group.

## 3. COVID-19 PRACTICES

In accordance with advice from Queensland Health, the Queensland Parliament will abide by the practices contained in the traffic light advice.

**Green (baseline)** - there are low rates of community transmission and Queensland is not in a COVID-19 wave. The green light practices are:

- stay home if you're sick;
- keep up to date with your vaccinations;
- maintain good hygiene;
- take a rapid test (RAT) if you get COVID-19 symptoms; and
- wear a mask if a place you are visiting asks you to.

**Amber (Tier 1)** - there are moderate rates of community transmission and Queensland is coming off a wave or may be entering a new wave. The amber light practices are to follow the green light practices and:

- wear a mask:
  - in healthcare settings
  - indoors, if you can't socially distance
  - on public transport
  - if you are older or medically at risk
  - if you're around people who are vulnerable to COVID-19
- take a rapid test (RAT) every 2 days if someone in your household has COVID-19.

**Red (Tier 2)** - there are high rates of community transmission and Queensland is entering or in a COVID-19 wave. When the traffic light is red, the advice for both the amber and green traffic lights should be followed and a mask is worn indoors, even if you can socially distance.

### 3.1 Hygiene

All visitor and employee bathrooms in the Parliamentary Annexe are fitted with clean running water, liquid soap, and paper towels.

In addition, a large number of automatic alcohol-based hand sanitiser stations have been installed in public areas throughout the precinct, together with additional supplies of hand sanitiser pump dispensers in other locations including all office and dining areas.

Cleaning materials including disinfectant spray are available for Queensland Parliament employees to clean surfaces in back of house areas.

## 4. EMPLOYEE PRACTICES

On 15 July 2022 the Clerk of the Parliament issued a *General Directive to Officers and Employees No. 1/22 COVID-19* (Clerk's Directive). The purpose of the *Clerk's Directive* is to:

- continue to encourage officers and employees to be vaccinated against COVID-19, keep their vaccination current by recommended boosters and upload their vaccination status in Human Resource Services records; and
- ensures the availability and supply of Rapid Antigen Tests (RAT tests) to all officers and employees.

### 4.1 RAT tests

All Service Area Leaders have been supplied with RAT tests, each staff member are provided two RAT tests to take home. These RAT tests are provided to staff to diagnose COVID-19 quickly at home instead of attending the workplace and thereby reducing spread. This affects the likelihood of transmission in the workplace.

RAT tests supplied are for the use of staff only.

#### 4.1.1 Use of RAT tests

If a staff member has any of the common symptoms of COVID-19 they are expected to use the RAT test(s) supplied.

It is an obligation on all staff members to minimise the risk to their co-workers by not attending the workplace if they have any COVID-19 symptoms without first being tested.

RAT tests will be replaced on use and reporting.

### 4.2 Obligations of staff if COVID-19 positive

As outlined by the Clerk, staff members who test positive for COVID-19 must follow the below instructions.

- Commence immediate sick leave for a minimum period of three days. This requirement applies regardless of the severity of symptoms as a proactive measure to reduce the risk of transmission in the workplace.
- Staff are not to return to work until they are no longer showing COVID symptoms.
- When returning to work, staff must continue to wear a face mask for a period of at least 7 days commencing from the date they tested positive to COVID-19.
- Inform their Manager and Payroll Services of their positive test.

### 4.3 General staff practices

Revised telecommuting arrangements were developed if required in the event of further outbreaks.

Various video conferencing tools are in use for meetings and other non-essential face-to-face gatherings where practical.

Employees working on-site, in the workplace, will be required to:

- Sign-in and out each day via current hard copy or electronic time sheet systems. Details will be retained for a minimum of 56 days, and kept in accordance with the *Information Privacy Act 2009* (Qld).
- Stay home when sick and seek medical treatment and/or COVID-19 testing as necessary.
- Practice good hygiene by frequently cleaning their hands and practicing cough and sneeze etiquette.

Commercial grade alcohol-based hand sanitiser will be available in strategic common use areas and all work areas.

Free, confidential counselling services are available for parliamentary employees, volunteers and their immediate family.

## 5. COVID-19 OUTBREAK MANAGEMENT

All Queensland Parliamentary Service employees are required to report illness with flu-like symptoms to their line manager.

Employees are required to stay home when sick and seek medical treatment and/or COVID-19 testing as necessary.

All employees have been provided with two RAT tests to take home.

COVID-19 outbreak management processes and controls for each scenario have been developed in consultation with Queensland Health guidelines and Workplace Health and Safety Queensland.

## 6. LEGISLATION AND DIRECTIONS

The **COVID-Safe Plan: Parliament House** is based on the:

- *Parliamentary Service Act 1988* (Qld);
- *General Directive to Officers and Employees No. 1/22 COVID-19* (the 'Clerk's Directive'); and
- *Queensland Health traffic light advice*.

As a "live" and dynamic document, this *COVID-Safe Plan* will be updated regularly in response to best practice advice, relevant legislation and public health directions.