



The Order of Australia Association

Memorandum to Branch and Regional Group Chairmen regarding COVID-19

Current as at November 16, 2020

As Australia starts to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown and state/territory borders are re-open, there have been questions raised as to when branch and regional group meetings and activities involving groups of people can be safely resumed.

The organisation, size and timing of these events will be determined by a range of factors including health and venue regulations. Regardless of these, it is essential that our members adhere strictly to 3 main principles.

Firstly we must **not become complacent** and relax the basic activities that have brought us this far, namely

- continue regular frequent hand washing/sanitisation
- cover any cough/sneeze, preferably with a handkerchief or elbow
- maintain the required social distancing
- stay at home if at all unwell
- report flu like symptoms immediately and get tested

All members will have heard this repeated ad nauseam, but it will be all too easy to lapse into old ways now stay-at-home and quarantine restrictions are lifted and we increasingly start moving about in the community, and so it bears repeating.

Secondly we strongly recommend all members should have the **COVID Safe app downloaded** on their mobile phone. This will be vital as we move back into the community and come in contact with greater numbers of people. It is safe, the information it contains is secure and it provides an invaluable tool to help limit the spread of the disease until such time as a vaccine becomes available or the disease is eradicated.

Thirdly **get accurate information and advice**. As each State and Territory moves into various stages of recovery and the community comes out of the lockdown phase, people will begin to use public open spaces, public utilities and businesses – particularly catering and hospitality. Interstate borders will be opened and extended travel will be permitted. **It is essential that members get accurate and detailed information on the rules and regulations in place in their particular State and Territory.**

It is essential Branches and Regional Groups comply with the regulations applicable to their location, the most up-to-date public health specialist information coupled with those set by the venue where meetings and events will be held. All Branch and Regional Chairs are urged to keep themselves fully informed and up-to-date with COVID-19 regulations.

Members are urged to concentrate on the official advice they obtain from their State/Territory Government coronavirus website and not take notice or pass on material they receive from other sources.

When it comes to deciding when to resume Order of Australia Association face-to-face meetings and activities involving members and guests and the public physically getting together, Branch and Regional Group committees should decide this in the light of the latest coronavirus government health information along with their own member demographic and

local coronavirus infection statistics. It should be kept in mind that the average members age and health profile puts them in the highest at-risk category should they contract this disease. For this reason Branches and or Regional Groups may consider it is prudent to delay returning to face-to-face meetings and activities longer than for the population at large. Any meetings will still require compliance along with the other basic preventative measures and those implemented by venues.



Venues in some states/territories require all attendees (members, guests and volunteers) to register on their smartphone using the QR code,

Noting not all our members have a smartphone, Branches and Regional Groups should have an Office Bearer authorised to provide the venue with the list of all attendees noting first name and surname, telephone number and arrival and departure times.

Above is a sample
QR Code