



COVID-19: LEGAL INFO

This sheet is intended to provide **general legal information** about the law in Queensland. **This information is not legal advice.** If you have a particular legal problem you should contact a solicitor for legal advice. At the end is a list of agencies that might be able to assist you, including legal agencies.

These Rules are current as at 16 May 2020. Because it is very likely that these rules will change, please keep checking for changes.

WHAT IS COVID-19?

COVID-19 also known as Corona Virus is a very serious illness which is spreading quickly through the community. This illness is making many people very sick, and some people have to go to hospital, sometimes for a long time. People including young people have also died from this illness.

This crisis of COVID-19 is so serious that the government has made new rules around how people are allowed to socialise at home and in public.

There are new rules around:

- What you are allowed to do,
- Where you are allowed to go; and
- Who you are allowed to be with.

If you break these rules you can be arrested and taken by police or fined on the spot.

Can I leave my home?

You can only leave your home if you are going to do certain things.

This includes:

- Buying “essential” things you need to live (like food and medicine)
- Go to the doctor, have a medical test (like a blood test or x-ray) or visit another health service (like Headspace or Evolve)
- To escape from harm (like if someone is attacking you)
- Get some exercise (like walking your dog)
- Go out for recreation (fun). Recreation includes going to a park, going out on the water, having a picnic, having a driving lesson, going to the shops to buy other things like clothes - not just for food or essential things. BUT you cannot travel more than 150 km (or if you live in the “*outback” 500km) from your home to do these things.
- Go to a Police Station
- Go to Court where you have been ordered to go (see below)
- Do something the courts had ordered you to do, like go to Youth Justice Office or attend a program.
- Help an immediate member of your family (like pick your little brothers and sisters up from school)
- Go to school if your school allows you to - (Check with your school if you can attend in person)

- Go to work where that can't be done from home (like working in a supermarket)
- If you are under 18 you can visit your parents or brothers and sisters at their home. You are not allowed contact with someone over 70 years old, or anyone who is unwell and at risk of getting even more unwell if they get COVID-19.
- Visit someone at their home (there are very strict rules - see below)

You can't leave home for any other reason - this means you can't have a party or meet up with a group of friends just to hang out (like in a park or shopping centre).

Who can I be with in public?

You can leave your home with up to 9 other people. The maximum of people who can be together in public is 10.

Where can I go?

You can go to parks and skate parks with friends so long as there are only 9 other people in your group. You have to keep 1.5 meters (about two arms' lengths) away from each other and other people at the park.

You can play non-contact sport (like tennis or cricket) with up to 9 other people (this includes spectators and coaches). You can only do contact sports (like boxing, footy, or wrestling) with members of your household.

Libraries are open but only 10 people can be in there at a time.

If you go inside a shop or business, you have to keep at least 1.5 metres from other people. A lot of shops have security guards counting people. The people who run the business have to limit how many people can be in their shop at the same time. You may have to wait your turn before you can go in.

You can “eat in” at some places, like McDonalds and KFC, but only a total of 10 people are allowed to eat in at any one time. You cannot “eat in” at a food court in a shopping centre.

How many people can be in my house?

No more than 5 visitors are allowed to come to your house at any one time. If you have visitors, you must try to stay 1.5 metres from them and they should stay 1.5 meters from each other. Even if you do not own the house or you are not the person

renting it, you can get into trouble if people do not follow these rules. People can't stay over-night.

Who can I visit?

Only 5 people can visit another person's house at the same time. You and up to 4 other people, even if none of you live together, can visit a friend's house together. But if there is already 4 people visiting your friend you will have to go there alone. If you are visiting someone you must try to stay 1.5 metres from them and everyone else at the house.

What if I have to go to court during the COVID crisis?

Court is still operating, but to keep people safe the courts are putting most matters off without young people needing to come to court. If you have a lawyer, you should call them and ask them if you need to go to court. If you do not have a lawyer see who can help below.

You will still have to go to court sometime in the future. If you are not at court when your charge is put off, the court will let you know your next court date. If you move house you should call the court and let them know.

If you are on bail and you want to change your bail conditions, call your lawyer if you have one otherwise see who can help you below.

Spitting, coughing or sneezing on certain workers

It is always against the law to spit on another person (assault). It is now an offence to intentionally (on purpose) spit, sneeze or cough on any "public officials" and workers: this includes police, any health workers, ambulance officers,

teachers, shop workers and bus or taxi drivers. It is also an offence to threaten to do it. You do not need to have COVID-19 to be charged under these rules (for example if you say "have some Corona" when you cough but you know you don't have it, you can still be charged because a person has been made to fear that you might be sick and they might now be infected).

To be safe, if you are near anyone and you have to cough or sneeze, cover your mouth or nose - use your elbow, or tissue.

What happens if I break these rules?

Police are on the look-out for anyone who doesn't do what they are supposed to because the COVID-19 crisis is very serious.

If the police see you with a group of people that you live with, they might want to talk to you even if you are doing nothing wrong. If the police come to your house, for example, because of a noise complaint and you have more than two visitors, then everyone who lives there can get into trouble not just the person who invited the others over.

If you are stopped or questioned by police you **must** give them your name, age and address. If police approach you, try to stay calm and be clear on the reason why you are out. Before you leave the house think about what you would do or say if the police came up to you. You can only go out if you are doing something listed under "Can I leave my home?"

The police can arrest you or give you an on the spot fine up to \$1345.00 if they think you are breaking the rules

Who can help?

Youth Advocacy Centre (YAC) www.yac.net.au	3356 1002
Hub Community Legal www.communitylegal.org.au	3372 7677
YFS Legal www.yfs.org.au	3826 1500
Legal Aid Queensland www.legalaid.qld.gov.au	1300 651 188
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Legal Service www.atsils.org.au	3025 3888 or (free call) 1800 012 255 (24hrs 7 days a week)
Indigenous Youth Health Service www.atsichsbrisbane.org.au	3240 8971
Child Safety After Hours Service (24hrs) (DOC)	3235 9999 or (free call) 1800 177 135
Youth Legal Advice Hotline	1800 527 527
Kids Help Line	1800 551 800
H.A.D.S. (Queensland Health)	3646 8704
Headspace www.headspace.org.au	3370 3900
Tenants Queensland www.tenantsqld.org.au	1300 744 263
Community Legal Centres (CLCs) see www.naclc.org.au for your nearest CLC	

For further information:

<https://www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert>

<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/coronavirus>

<https://tenantsqld.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/COVID-19-Fact-Sheet-26-3-20-v3.pdf>

*Outback includes Balonne, Banana, Barcaldine, Barcoo, Blackall-Tambo, Boulia, Bulloo, Carpentaria, Central Highlands, Cloncurry, Croydon, Diamantina, Etheridge, Flinders, Longreach, Maranoa, McKinlay, Mount Isa, Murweh, Paroo, Quilpie, Richmond, and Winton.

This information was last reviewed and updated as at 16 May 2020. The Youth Advocacy Centre does not accept responsibility for any action or outcome as a result of anyone relying on the information provided.