



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 March 2021. Because it is very likely that these rules will change, please keep checking for changes.

WHAT IS COVID-19?

COVID-19 also known as Coronavirus 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 had to make new rules around how people are allowed to socialise at home and in public. These rules have changed from time to time as the risk of catching the illness has decreased.

The rules are about:

- 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.

IMPORTANT: from time to time the government will designate certain areas as a “restricted area”. This means that the limit on the number of people who can be together is lower than in the rest of the State. Check

<https://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19/current-status/restricted-area-covid-19> to find the latest “restricted areas”.

Can I leave my home?

You can leave your home and travel anywhere in Queensland. You can also travel interstate BUT if you go to a “COVID Hotspot” you will have to go into quarantine for two weeks in a hotel when you come back to Queensland which you will have to pay for. Check

<https://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19/current-status/hotspots-covid-19> to find the latest designated “hotspots”.

You must always keep at least 1.5 meters (about 2 arms’ lengths) away from other people.

Who can I be with in public?

You can leave your home and meet up with up a group of people in public spaces, including parks and skate parks. If you are in a “restricted area” you can only gather in public in groups of 10.

If you are **not** in a “restricted area”, the maximum number of people who can be together in a group in public (like for a party) is 500.

Remember you have to keep 1.5 metres away from other people including people in your group. You should not hug or shake hands.

Where can I go?

You are able to go to most everyday places (like libraries, gyms, cinemas) but only a certain number of people are allowed to be there at the same time. The bigger the area the more people are allowed. Places that are smaller than 200 square metres can only have a maximum of 100 people so you may not be allowed in until someone leaves. Lots of venues, like movies and big sports stadiums, can now operate at full capacity.

Everyone has to keep 1.5 meters apart but there are exceptions, like playing sport including contact sport. If you are not participating, like not swimming in a pool or you are watching a friend’s football game, you have to keep away from other people at the game.

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.

It is important to keep track of people who have COVID-19 because they can infect other people. Many places, like dine-in restaurants (including fast food places) and cafes, cinemas, gaming arcades, indoor play centres, gyms, and hairdressers have to keep contact details of people who come and go. They will ask for your name, email address and mobile phone number. They will keep this information for 56 days and then delete it. They can only share your details with Queensland Health. If you are getting takeaway food you do not need to give this information.

How many people can be in my house?

If you live in a “restricted area” you can only have a total of 10 people (including people who live there) in your house. No more than 100 people (including people who live there) are allowed to be in your house at the same time if you live in a “non-restricted area”.

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.

Who can I visit?

You are allowed to meet up with friends at another person's house, even if none of you live together. If someone is having a party the maximum number of people allowed to be in the house (including people who live there) is 10 if they live in a "restricted area". If it isn't in a "restricted area", the maximum is 100 (including people who live there).

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?

The Courts are operating with young people usually have to attend in person. Court matters that were put off earlier in the year are now being heard. If you have a lawyer, you should call them and ask them when you need to go to court. If you do not have a lawyer see *who can help* 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 if I have been given a quarantine notice?

If you have been given a written notice to self-quarantine you should contact YAC, Hub Community Legal or the Legal Aid Queensland Youth Legal Advice Hotline - the phone numbers are listed at the end of this sheet.

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 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 there are more than 100 people (or 10 if the house is in a "restricted" area) in the house, 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. The police can arrest you or give you an on the spot fine up to \$1,345.00 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 (24 hrs)
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>

This information was last reviewed and updated as at 16 March 2021. The Youth Advocacy Centre does not accept responsibility for any action or outcome as a result of anyone relying on the information provided.