



MARIST BROTHERS
Province of Australia

CORONAVIRUS PROTOCOLS

AS AT 3 APRIL 2020

These Protocols have been developed in order to maximise our efforts at maintaining 'best health' for our Brothers and to help minimise the spread of the coronavirus.

These Protocols are placed on the Brothers' section of the Province website and may be altered from time to time.

Characteristics of the virus are changing daily and there is now evidence of transmission within the community from unknown sources. Community transmissions are suspected from asymptomatic and from undiagnosed Covid-19 individuals. Asymptomatic means that a person can be a carrier of the virus, without showing any signs or symptoms of the virus.

It has been shown that an individual can carry the virus for 28 days without showing any signs or symptoms.

This is a critical stage in the fight to contain the spread of this virus within Australia. We will know within a couple of weeks if we have slowed the rate transmission. Until then, we have to observe these and all other precautions diligently.

Each of the Aged Care Brothers' residences has developed its own set of protocols in response to the coronavirus situation.

What is detailed in this document relates to the other Communities in the Province.

We owe it to each other and to ourselves to follow all guidelines and protocols around hygiene, social distancing and travel, in particular.

All Brothers should be cautious and careful. Take no risks. A Brother who puts himself at risk puts his community of Brothers and others at risk.

1. Personal and Communal hygiene

Practising good hand and sneeze/cough hygiene and keeping your distance from others when you are sick is the best defence against most viruses.

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, before and after eating, and after going to the toilet.
- Cover your cough and sneeze, dispose of tissues and wash your hands.
- If unwell, avoid contact with others (stay more than 1.5 metres from people).

2. Cleaning

To minimise the spread of germs, regularly clean surfaces that are frequently touched such as door handles, light switches, kitchen and bathroom areas. [Australian Government guidelines](#)

recommend using a strong-alcohol-based cleaning agent. If such a cleaning agent cannot be sourced, clean with a household detergent or disinfectant.

3. Social Distancing

- a) Please remember that social distancing is as important in the house as it is outside. Keeping a minimum of 2 metres between each other needs to be practiced inside and out. Many communities have made temporary adjustments to seating arrangements around the dinner table, within the chapel and lounge areas in order to ensure there is sufficient space between Brothers.
- b) It follows that visitors to the house should be kept to an absolute minimum. It is our expectation that only staff (both employees and contractors) would be entering a Marist Community at this point in time. Brothers' own family members should not be visiting the community.

4. Ministry

Brothers who undertake voluntary work or non-essential ministry are to cancel those commitments until further notice.

5. Travel

- a) Public transport should be avoided where possible.
- b) On 30 March 2020, the Government announced:
 - *Everyone should stay home unless you are shopping for essentials, receiving medical care, exercising or travelling to work or education.*
 - *People aged 70 or over, people aged over 65 with pre-existing conditions and Indigenous people aged 50 with pre-existing conditions should stay home for their own protection. This means that all these people are not to leave their home.*
- c) These recommendations have not been made lightly by the Government. Therefore, Brothers who are aged 70 or older, or who are aged 65 or older with pre-existing conditions should not go out. They should stay at home. They can exercise at home, either inside or in the backyard.
- d) For a Brother who is in either of the categories mentioned in 5(c):
 - Have a Brother who is younger than 70 years shop for you.
 - If there is no Brother younger than 70 years, phone your chemist and have your pharmacy deliver, order your food on the internet (at Woolworths and Coles Seniors are prioritised) and have it delivered. Phone a younger Brother in a Community close by, or a friend or member of your parish and ask them to do a shop for you. Everyone is willing to help each other.
- e) For Brothers who are not in any of the categories noted in 5(c) above:
 - Limit any excursions outside of the house to an absolute minimum. Do not drop in at other communities. A walk in the fresh air by oneself or a necessary visit to the doctor,

supermarket or chemist would be acceptable. Casual trips elsewhere are to be avoided for the time being.

- Those who do the shopping for the Community (supermarket, chemist etc) should be masked – there is strong evidence to support the wisdom of wearing masks. Masks can be hard to come by. Try ordering at Amazon online. Remember a mask can be worn multiple times for short periods. When not being used, the mask should be placed in a bag, such as a sealed plastic type bag, with the Brother's name on it to avoid someone else using the mask.
- It is recommended that a Brother who is under 70 years of age and who has health issues, poor respiratory system, recovering from surgery or illness, prone to colds and flus, aged or infirm should wear a surgical mask when away from home.

6. If feeling unwell

If a Brother is feeling unwell with flu-like symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat, tiredness or shortness of breath, body muscle pain...) he should contact his General Practitioner who will determine an action plan. If his GP is non-contactable, then the Brother should call the **Coronavirus Health Information Line** for advice (**1800 020 080**). Other contacts are the State and Commonwealth Health Departments.

If either of these agencies recommends a visit to the GP or to the testing centre, the Brother should drive himself to that appointment if indeed he holds a current driver's licence. If he is not able to drive himself to the appointment because he does not hold a current driver's licence, he will need to be driven by another Brother. Both Brothers in the vehicle will need to be masked, gloved and seated as far apart as possible.

If a Brother has serious symptoms such as difficulty breathing, **000** should be called for urgent medical help.

7. If a Brother in the community is suspected of having the coronavirus

- The Brother and any other person who has been in close contact with him must self-isolate until the result of the test is known. The Health Authorities will determine who is classified as being in close contact with the Brother. This test result may take up to 72 hours to be known. This isolation is intended to stop the spread of the virus and to protect the other Brothers and staff in the residence.
- Being isolated means that the Brother remains in his own room until the Health Authority returns the results of the test. If the Brother's room does not have an ensuite, or if he shares a common bathroom, then a toilet and a shower should be allocated for his personal use only.
- The Brother eats his meals in his room using his own utensils and crockery which are well washed separately in hot water.
- If isolated, keep in touch with others via telephone, email or social media. Where possible, keep up normal daily routines, such as eating nutritious and healthy food and exercise. Arrange to work from home. Do things that help you relax and use isolation

as an opportunity to do activities for which you don't usually have time. Give some forethought as to how you could occupy your time in such a situation.

- The Health Authority, or our Province Health Coordinators, might issue the Brother with personal equipment for his use, such as protective masks, gloves, gown, contaminated waste bags etc.
- The other Brothers in the Community who have not been in close contact are not required to self-isolate, unless they are experiencing the symptoms noted in point 6 above.

8. If a Brother in the Community has tested positive for the coronavirus

- The Brother continues to abide by what is listed in 7 above.
- The Brother is to be isolated in his room until public health authorities inform him that it is safe to return to his usual activities.
- The health authorities may determine that all the Brothers are confined to the residence, though permitted to move around outside the house keeping well away from other persons, workplaces, schools and other educational places, childcare centres, public gatherings.
- It may not be feasible for employees (cooks, cleaners etc) to attend work. It may be that the health authorities determine that these employees do not attend work.
- It would be helpful for other nearby communities to offer assistance – purchasing and delivering food for example. In some places the supermarket chains have already ceased home deliveries, so local support would be required. In regional locations where there are no other communities, consideration is to be given as to who would be able to support the Community and to plan ahead. It might be the school, local Association group, SVDP, Parish.

9. Community Leader

Where the Brother is feeling unwell, or if a Brother goes into isolation, or if a Brother tests positive to the Coronavirus, the Community Leader should contact either of our Health Care Coordinators: **Corinne McPhee (0407 469 339)** or **Bruce Houghton (0417 324 702)**, who will take any additional necessary action and alert anyone else who needs to be notified.

10. Advice and Information

For the latest advice and information, go to www.health.gov.au. The **National Coronavirus Help Line** phone is **1800 020 080**. It operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

11. Flu Vaccinations

It is strongly advisable to make arrangements to get a Flu vaccine. Phone your Doctor's surgery first and ask what arrangements exist for obtaining the Flu vaccine. Chemists also are giving the Flu vaccine; phone the Chemist and ask what arrangements exist for obtaining the Flu vaccine.

Let us all continue to take precautions to help limit the spread of this highly contagious virus.