May 2020 Community Update Covid-19

The World Health Organisation has declared Covid-19 (coronavirus) a global pandemic. All residents and visitors are being asked to take responsibility to ensure the health and safety of themselves and others.

This newsletter has been translated into the following community languages: Chinese traditional, Chinese simplified, Russian, Vietnamese, Indonesian and Spanish – available at **cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/stay-safe**

This newsletter is from the City of Sydney in partnership with NSW Health, NSW Police Force, Department of Communities and Justice, Women's Safety NSW and NSW Land and Housing Corporation. It provides information about health, safety and support available to you.

NSW Police Force

Service NSW hotline

This is a 24 hour, 7 day a week hotline to answer your questions about support and government assistance. Hotline staff can follow up on specific concerns and give general information. Call **137 788.**

The latest health information

Visit **health.gov.au** or call the National Coronavirus Helpline on **1800 020 080.** This operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For translating or interpreting services, call **131 450.**

If you have concerns about your health speak to your doctor.

City of Sydney support and services

While the pandemic has changed how we work our priority is to continue to deliver services to our community. Our cleansing and waste, rangers, city operations and customer service teams are continuing to provide essential services.

City staff are on the street seven days per week supporting people sleeping rough to access health and accommodation support.

Our meals on wheels service continues to operate.

We offer some of our community programs online. Visit **whatson.sydney** for details.

As well as these services, we are offering funds to organisations servicing vulnerable people in our communities. We are releasing an extra $1.5 million in community services grants. These are for not-for-profits and social enterprises that provide food, digital assistance and programs to help people feel connected.

We have also donated $1 million to OzHarvest to help them get more food to the people who need it.

City of Sydney Community Hotline

You can call us on **9265 9333** Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm for advice on non-emergency and non-medical information or referral to other services. If you'd like to receive a regular phone call, call us on **9265 9333** to register for our **Community Check-in Service.**

About the Covid-19 coronavirus

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses known to cause respiratory infections. The current pandemic is due to the Covid-19 coronavirus. Covid-19 is most likely to spread person-to-person through:

- Close contact with a person while they are infectious or in the 24 hours before their symptoms appeared

- Close contact with a person with a confirmed infection who coughs or sneezes

- Touching objects or surfaces (such as door handles or tables) contaminated from a cough or sneeze from a person with a confirmed infection, and then touching your mouth or face.

The NSW Government now encourages anyone with symptoms to come forward for Covid-19 testing. Symptoms include fever, cough, tiredness, sore or scratchy throat and shortness of breath.

If you are feeling any of these symptoms, you should:

- Find a Covid-19 testing centre near you

- Call your doctor

- Call the National Coronavirus Helpline on 1800 020 080

- Visit one of the public Covid-19 clinics to see if you should get tested.

Our role in a COVIDSafe Australia

While the NSW Government begins to ease Covid-19 restrictions we all have a role to play to ensure we remain safe and stop the spread of the virus.

As we begin to recover over the coming months you're asked to maintain 1.5m physical distancing, maintain hand hygiene, practise respiratory hygiene, stay home when you are sick and download the COVIDSafe app.

How to prevent spread of infection

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

Help stop the spread of the virus

Clean your hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub.

Avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms.

Get your free flu vaccination to prevent winter flu.

Try and keep 1.5m away from other people (more if sick) and avoid kissing and shaking hands.

Stay home if you are sick.

Local testing if you're feeling unwell

The NSW Government is urging anyone experiencing symptoms of Covid-19 to be tested in a bid to curb the spread of the virus. Covid-19 symptoms can include fever, cough, tiredness (fatigue), sore throat and shortness of breath. You can access a friendly screening clinic locally.

Call the free Health Direct hotline on **1800 022 222.**

Name of clinic	Location	Opening hours
RPA Hospital COVID-19 Clinic	Level 3, Gloucester Drive Entrance off Missenden Road, Camperdown	Open 8am–10pm, 7 days a week The last patient is triaged at 9pm to allow time for assessing
Redfern Health Centre COVID-19 Clinic	103–105 Redfern Street, Redfern Contact: **9395 0444**	Open 9am–4pm, Monday to Friday
Balmain Hospital General Practice Casualty	29 Booth Street, Balmain	Open 8am–10pm, 7 days a week Please note: This is not a Covid-19 clinic but it can assess a small number of people
Sydney Eye Hospital	Emergency Department Contact: ED triage **9382 7008**	Open 24 hours
St Vincents Public Hospital Flu Assessment Clinic	390 Victoria Street, Darlinghurst Contact: **8382 1111**	Open 10am–8pm, 7 days a week

The risk of serious illness increases with age, particularly for people with chronic illnesses or weakened immune systems.

Looking after your mental health and wellbeing

The outbreak of Covid-19 has impacted people across the world. Many of us may be feeling afraid, worried, anxious and overwhelmed.

Support is available

Help is available if you need it:

Lifeline
131 114 – operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Lifeline Text
0477 13 11 14 – operates 6pm – midnight (AEDT), 7 nights a week

Headspace
12–25 years old – **1800 650 890** or **visit headspace.org.au**

Transcultural Mental Health – for culturally and linguistically diverse communities – **1800 648 911**

Kids Helpline
For children that may need support **kidshelpline.com.au** or call **1800 55 1800**

Beyond Blue
Call **1300 22 4636** or **visit beyondblue.org.au**

NSW Mental Health Line
1800 011 511

Staying apart, keeping together: Listing online events on What's On

Staying apart doesn't mean we can't keep together. Live music broadcasts, online exercise classes and other digital events can help keep us connected.

Enjoy free virtual classes, programs and events at **whatson.sydney**

If you have questions or ideas, please email us at **whatson@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au** or call **9265 9333.**

Housing Services – Department of Communities and Justice

Avoiding fraud and scams

Changes to services

In line with health advice, the department is changing how people access services from its housing teams.

Do not to attend their offices – call them first instead. If you cannot access a critical service on the phone or online, they'll give you an appointment at their local office.

For more information visit **coronavirus.dcj.nsw.gov.au**

You can also access its housing services at **facs.nsw.gov.au/myhousing** or the MyHousing app.

Financial assistance

If you're a tenant with Department of Communities and Justice and have lost your job due to the Covid-19 health emergency, they can reduce your rent until you receive your Centrelink payment. Tell your housing officer online or over the phone.

Home visits

Housing staff are trained on how to best protect themselves and tenants from Covid-19. If you're due to have a visit from housing staff and you feel unwell, or you're self-isolating or under quarantine, tell your local housing office. Housing staff will call you before they visit.

Maintenance and cleaning services in public housing

Essential services including cleaning, security, maintenance and rodent management will continue.

Managing maintenance during this time:

• Contractors doing maintenance at your home must call you before attending and follow federal and state health and safety standards

• You can postpone non-emergency or essential works in your home. Talk to the contractor when they contact you

• To avoid sewer chokes or overflows in your home, please flush only toilet paper down your toilet

• If you're unwell, in self-imposed isolation or have been diagnosed with Covid-19 tell the maintenance line so they can take appropriate safety measures.

Call the maintenance line 24 hours, 7 days a week on 1800 422 322 or report on e-Repairs at **interfinder.net**

There have been reports of scams related to Covid-19. Messages that pretend to be government and other trusted organisations are phishing scams. They often contain a link to a fake website that asks you to enter confidential details.

If you receive communication in a text message or email that you think may be a scam, delete it. Do not open any attachments or click on any links. If you've clicked on a link or think someone may have accessed your financial information, contact your bank immediately.

If you've suffered financial loss from cybercrime, report it to ReportCyber at **cyber.gov.au/report**

Stay up-to-date on scams in Australia at **staysmartonline.gov.au** or call 1300 292 371.

Community housing tenants

The health and wellbeing of you and housing provider staff is the highest priority, therefore during this period there will be changes to how services operate.

Please visit your community housing provider's website for Covid-19 updates in relation to service delivery including maintenance and home visits. You can contact your Housing Manager by phone or email as usual, and only go to the office by prior appointment.

Support and assistance

Income support for individuals

The federal government is temporarily expanding eligibility for income support payments. It has announced a new, time-limited coronavirus supplement of $550 per fortnight. This is for existing and new recipients of JobSeeker Payment, Youth Allowance JobSeeker, Parenting Payment, Farm Household Allowance and Special Benefit. You may also be eligible for additional payments.

For the latest information visit **australia.gov.au**

Free data and calls

Many telephone network providers are giving extra data to their customers. Some are offering unlimited calls and unmetered access to health websites. Contact your provider to see what they can offer.

If you need support with bills

If you are having trouble paying other household bills like electricity, gas or water, contact your service provider. Many service providers are giving assistance to customers impacted by the coronavirus.

Be aware that they may also be experiencing delays. The Energy and Water Ombudsman NSW has good resources if you are facing financial difficulties. Visit **ewon.com.au** or call **1800 246 545.**

Homelessness services

If you're at risk of or experiencing homelessness help is available. Link2home is the statewide homelessness information and referral telephone service. Call **1800 152 152,** 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Drug health services

Free needle syringe programs continue across NSW but some have reduced capacity. Please call ahead to ensure a service is open at the time you wish to attend.

Kirketon Road Centre – **9360 2766**

Redfern Harm Minimisation Program – **9395 0400**

For all locations, visit **health.nsw.gov.au/hepatitis/Pages/nsp-outlets.aspx**

If you need support with access to food and essential items, contact our community hotline on 9265 9333

Domestic and family violence

No one should feel unsafe in their home. Domestic and family violence does not discriminate. It can occur in all sectors of the community and all cultural groups. It affects the physical, emotional, social and economic wellbeing of all members of the family, including children.

Help continues to be available for people experiencing violence and abuse during this time. You can call:

1800 RESPECT 24/7 **1800 737 732**

Aboriginal Domestic and Family Violence Hotline 24/7 **1800 019 123**

Kids Helpline 24/7 **1800 551 800**

MensLine **1300 789 978**

If you are experiencing an immediate fear of violence or threat, call Triple Zero (000) and ask for police. If you are speech or hearing impaired, call the national relay service on **133 677.**

For more information and links to services, visit **cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/ domestic-violence-support**

Think about your neighbour

If you know someone who may feel isolated, reach out to them and let them know you care. Call them to check on their welfare, send an email, or make a Skype call. Be creative and stay connected in a safe way.

If you're worried about access to food, essentials or basic services, contact our Community Hotline on **9265 9333,** or in an emergency contact **Triple Zero (000).**

Helpful contacts

Health and wellbeing	Safety contacts	Housing and supports
Health Direct Hotline (24 hours) **1800 020 080**	Emergency Triple Zero **(000)**	Housing Contact Centre **1800 422 322**
Health Information **health.gov.au**	Police Assistance Line (for non emergencies) **131 444**	Link2Home Homelessness **1800 152 152**
Aboriginal Medical Service **9319 5823**	Crime Stoppers (to report confidentially) **1800 333 000**	Inner Sydney Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service **9698 5975**
Mental Health Line (24 hours) **1800 011 511**	**Local Police Stations**	Tenants' Union of NSW **1800 251 101**
Lifeline (24 hours) **131 114**	Sydney City **9265 6499**	Energy and Water Ombudsman **1800 246 545**
Beyond Blue **1300 224 636**	The Rocks **8220 6399**	Free Translating and Interpreting Service **131 450**
Suicide Call Back Service **1300 659 467**	Glebe **9552 8099**	National Relay Service (speech and hearing impaired) **133 677 relayservice.gov.au**
ACON LGBTI Health **1800 063 060**	Kings Cross **8356 0099**	City of Sydney **9265 9333** (24 hours) **cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au**
QLife **1800 184 527**	Newtown **9550 8199**	
Kids Helpline **1800 551 800**	Redfern **8303 5199**	
NSW Ageing and Disability Abuse Helpline **1800 628 221**	Surry Hills **9265 4144**	
Alcohol and Drug Information Service **1800 250 015**	NSW Domestic Violence Line (24 hours) **1800 656 463**	
Needle Clean-up Hotline **1800 633 353**	NSW Rape Crisis Line **1800 424 017**	
	1800 RESPECT **1800 737 732**	
	Aboriginal Domestic and Family Violence Hotline (24 hours) **1800 019 123**	
	Men's Referral Service (24 hours) **1300 766 491**	
	MensLine **1300 789 978**	

Community safety information

Police stations continue to operate to protect the community and respond to crime 24 hours a day. If you witness antisocial behaviour or criminal activity, please contact the police.

Reporting crimes

Triple Zero (000)
For emergencies or a crime in progress.

Police Assistance Line (131 444)
Non-urgent crime reporting and general enquiries

Crimestoppers (1800 333 000)
To provide crime information confidentially

NSW Police online community portal
Report crimes such as theft, lost property, damage or graffiti at **portal.police.nsw.gov.au**

For more information visit **police.nsw.gov.au**