



17th March 2020

Ocean Youth Program Policy for COVID-19.

Our Ocean Youth participants and staff are our greatest priority. At this stage, following the advice of the Australian Government and the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) we remain business as usual for our program until further notice.

Ocean Youth has a maximum of 45 participants in any of its events, workshops or activities and as such we will proceed with any scheduled activities where all required personnel are available (including guest speakers, workshop facilitators etc). However as the situation is rapidly changing, we will be updating our policy as required or recommended by the respective health agencies which you'll find on our website.

To address the COVID-19 situation and to keep our Ocean Youth community as safe and well as possible we are implementing the following;

- The training of OY staff around COVID-19 and required hygiene practices.
- Social distancing of 1.5m where possible and practicable.
- The availability of hand sanitiser, tissues and anti-bacterial wipes at each event.
- Support for withdrawal from events if you or our staff are feeling unwell. This may impact upon the occurrence of the event if our staff, or our partner organisation, are unable to host the events. If this is the case the facilitator will be in touch to arrange an alternative date for the event.
- Additional precautionary measures and practices to our routines as recommended by the respective health agencies to help keep our community safe.
- We ask that if participants have returned from overseas travel within 14 days of an Ocean Youth workshop or event, that they abstain from that event.

Please keep an eye on the website for any event or policy updates.

We thank you for your understanding as we face uncertainty whilst managing this unprecedented situation.

More information:

On January 31 2020 the third meeting of the ad hoc Emergency Committee (the Committee) was convened by WHO on the basis of the Committee's advice, regarding the outbreak of COVID-19. The WHO Director-General has declared the outbreak constitutes a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC).

The most at risk parts of the community are the elderly and immuno-suppressed (health is already compromised in some way).

Signs and symptoms of the virus:

Symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to a range of other illnesses such as influenza and do not necessarily mean that you have COVID-19. Symptoms include:

- fever
- coughing
- difficulty breathing.

Difficulty breathing is a sign of possible pneumonia and requires immediate medical attention.

How does it spread?

Like the flu, COVID-19 can be transmitted from person to person. The scientific evidence confirms that COVID-19 is spread by droplets. This means that when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks, they may generate droplets containing the virus. These droplets are too large to stay in the air for long, so they quickly settle on surrounding surfaces.

Droplet-spread diseases can be spread by:

- coughing and sneezing
- close personal contact
- contact with an object or surface with viral particles on it and then touching your mouth, nose or eyes.

That's why it's really important to practice good hygiene, regularly wash and thoroughly dry your hands and practice good cough etiquette.

Current policies for containing the virus (per State/Country) are:

Australian Government:

The [Australian Health Protection Principal Committee \(AHPPC\)](#) has recommended limits on organised gatherings.

These include limiting non-essential:

- organised gatherings to fewer than 500 people
- meetings or conferences for critical workforce members, such as healthcare professionals and emergency services

These limits do not apply to workplaces, schools, universities, shops, supermarkets, public transport and airports.

[Source: Australian Government Department of Health](#)

NSW

On 15 March 2020, NSW Health Minister Brad Hazzard made an Order under Section 7 of the Public Health Act 2010 to force the immediate cancellation of major events with more than 500 people.

Individuals who fail to comply could face up to six months in prison or a fine of up to \$11,000 or both, plus additional penalties for each day the offence continues. Corporations face even harsher fines.

The order followed a statement on 13 March by the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) recommended:

- limiting non-essential organised gatherings to fewer than 500 people
- limiting non-essential meetings or conferences of critical workforce eg healthcare professionals and emergency services
- encouraging all Australians to exercise personal responsibility for social distancing measures
- initiating measures to protect vulnerable populations, such as reducing visitors to all residential care facilities and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

[Source: NSW Dept of Health](#)

Queensland

As a precautionary measure to help slow the spread of coronavirus, from Monday 16 March 2020, all non-essential organised gatherings of more than 500 people should not go ahead.

All essential day-to-day activities, such as school and work, can proceed as normal.

Anyone who is feeling unwell should not attend public events, and should stay home from work and school.

For more information, visit the [Australian Government website](#).

Queensland Health is continuing to work with the Australian Border Force to screen anyone who returns to Australia from overseas for symptoms of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) and provide them with information on self-quarantine.

If you have been overseas in the last 14 days and are feeling unwell, call your doctor immediately.

From Monday 16 March, if you have been overseas and are feeling well, you need to self-quarantine for 14 days from the date you left the overseas country.

You must also self-quarantine if you have been in [close contact](#) with someone who already has novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

[Source: Queensland Department of Health](#)

Victoria - State of Emergency declared

Mass gatherings have the potential for serious public health consequences if they are not planned and managed carefully.

From midday Monday 16 March 2020, the following directive will come into effect in Victoria, that focus on organised gatherings of people:

- The organising, attending or allowing of non-essential mass gatherings of 500 or more people will be prohibited.

[Source: Victorian Department of Health and Human Services](#)

New Zealand

New Zealand currently has very few cases of COVID-19 and no evidence of sustained person-to-person transmission in our communities. The likelihood of an ongoing outbreak remains low–moderate.

All arrivals from overseas travel must self-isolate for 14 days.

[Source: New Zealand Ministry of Health](#)

No matter where you are recommendations to stop the spread of the virus are:

- Wash hands regularly with soap. Doctors recommend singing Happy Birthday twice as a way to ensure an appropriate wash.
- Cover your nose and mouth with your hand or a tissue when sneezing. Wash your hands and bin the tissue afterwards.
- Cover your mouth with your elbow when coughing.
- Keep your hands away from your face.
- Use hand sanitiser with more than 60% alcohol
- Stay at home if you feel unwell.

[See the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services poster](#) here.