



## **CHAMBERS FRANKLYN COVID-19 POLICY**

(updated as at 30<sup>th</sup> March 2020)

This policy has been devised based on information provided by both the Federal & State Governments, our industry association Strata Community Australia and best practice methods.

We appreciate that some of the measures we are implementing may cause a slight disruption to the operation of your strata company however the safety and wellbeing of our clients, staff, service personnel and their families has always been the paramount concern for Chambers Franklyn Strata Management and we are adopting this policy and a range of other policies to ensure we can continue to manage and maintain your home, place of work and investment for the long term.

To stay up to date please refer to the following government website

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/collections/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-resources#home-isolation-and-care>

### **Visits to CFSM office**

Our office is currently closed to anyone other than our staff. If you need to contact our office please do so either via phone 9440 6222 or email [strata@chambersfranklyn.com.au](mailto:strata@chambersfranklyn.com.au) or if you know your managers email then please contact them directly.

### **Contractors**

#### **Key collection**

Keys will continue to be made available to contractors so as not to disrupt building management requirements. Appointments will be required for any contractor to collect keys.

#### **Maintenance and site attendance**

Contractors will still be required to attend strata properties and rectify faults. It is our recommendation to Council of Owners that only essential maintenance services should be conducted during this period.

All contractors will be provided with a copy of Chambers Franklyn COVID-19 contractor protocol document when a work order is issued.

Contractors will be advised to:

- avoid close personal contact with any one on site;
- sanitise hands and equipment if they are coming on site before and after conducting their duties;
- if they have been overseas or are feeling unwell, contact our office immediately and postpone the works – they should not attend the site;
- follow safe social distancing protocols and any other government directive

### **Site Visits**

Until further notice, CFSM employees will be only undertaking site visits in line with social distancing guidelines (i.e. no more than 2 person present). Further, these visits must be in an external environment i.e. they are unable to attend meetings within offices or apartments/private homes.

### **Security Device Orders**

Security devices such as remotes, access cards etc. are no longer able to be collected from our offices and must be sent Registered Mail.



## **Meetings**

In view of the Governments latest requirements limiting both indoor & outdoor gatherings to a maximum of 2 persons we cannot hold any face to face meetings.

The current strata title legislation does not permit electronic meetings this will change once the Strata Titles Amendment Act 2018 is proclaimed (**Commencement Day**), in the meantime the following steps can be taken to have meetings.

1. hold a general meeting with only one or two people in attendance, we suggest this would be the Strata Manager and the Chairman of the Council of owners (or other designated owner)
2. enable owners to participate in discussion during the general meeting; and
3. enable owners who are not present at the meeting to vote either prior to the meeting or in real time during the meeting after considering the discussion on each motion.

## **Real Time Directed Proxy**

Owners can sign a Real Time Directed Proxy Form which states that the Proxy must vote as the owner directs during the meeting. The direction to vote can be given by email, text, phone or other electronic means.

We are currently transitioning to online meetings and we expect this to be finalised in the coming weeks, we will also facilitate electronic meetings via Zoom, or Skype.

Our managers will be in contact with individual strata companies to ascertain the preferred method of conducting meetings.

## **Levy payments**

We acknowledge that many owners may be experiencing financial hardship over the coming months and as your strata manager we certainly understand and empathise with those in these situations. Under the current Strata Titles Act 1985 only the Strata Company (through the Council of Owners) has the authority to waive interest, postpone or cancel levy contributions unfortunately the Strata Manger does not have this authority.

If you have concerns regarding the payment of your levy contributions please contact your manager and let them know, we will then liaise with the Council of Owners for your property regarding suitable payment plans.

As a company we will not be charging any of our usual debt collection fees or issuing debt collection proceedings during this period.

## **Best Practice Guide**

Strata Community Australia has produced a best practice guide for residents in strata properties and that guide forms part of our policy as per below.

# Apartment Living and COVID-19 for Residents

## Introduction

The World Health Organisation has announced that COVID-19 is a pandemic.

States and Territories have started declaring a State of Emergency commencing 16th March 2020 for at least the next 4 weeks with possible extensions. Containment measures are increasing daily. Non-essential services have been shut down from midday 23rd March, including pools and gyms.

With a large percentage of the population already living or working in a Strata Community the chances are high that you will have someone already in self-quarantine or who has tested positive for COVID-19, living in your complex. It is also likely that this Pandemic will be around for some months yet.

As your community moves to lockdown, your buildings will be at capacity and will include all age groups. Everyone will be home for some weeks and quite possibly feeling under pressure with the uncertainty of the current circumstances. During this time, all residents should be encouraged to be tolerant, considerate and kind to each other. A common courtesy that may be tested during these potentially challenging times.

## Social Distancing

The Government has asked us all to practice social distancing. This means keeping your distance from people when using the common property and services such as hallways, stairs and lifts as applicable to your property, avoid non-essential large groups and work from home where possible. On a broader scale it also means avoiding non-essential travel.

This means that the Committee will need to restrict the use or close any or all community areas such as pools, gyms, BBQ, roof tops and any other community spaces. Please obey any signs indicating an area has been closed off.

Please be mindful of other residents when using lifts and hallways and keep a minimum of 1.5m from others.

Find information on social distancing here:  
<https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/03/coronavirus-covid-19-information-on-social-distancing.pdf>

## Self-Isolation or Quarantine

If you are voluntarily quarantining yourself or are living with someone under isolation and you live in an apartment, you have obligations to other residents, and you need to respect their right to a safe and hazard free environment. Self-isolation is not forced quarantine but if you do venture out you should take the precautions as notified by the Health Department as well as adhere to any local Committee policies and avoid using the common shared areas.

If you have received an order from the Health Department, you must follow the instructions contained in the order. If you're living with someone under isolation, wash your hands frequently, wear a surgical mask if caring for them and avoid using the common shared areas.

For more information, a copy of the Department of Health's Isolation Guide can be found [here](#).

## Are residents required to disclose to the Strata Community if they are self-quarantined or infected?

At this stage it is unknown if the Health Department intends to notify a Strata Community if it has issued a notice to a person to quarantine.

However, SCA recommends all residents and their visitors undertake best practice to provide a duty not cause a hazard or interfere with quiet enjoyment. The Strata Community has an obligation to maintain common property.

### Recommendation 1:

Health, safety and security of lot owners, occupiers of lots and others

- » A lot owner or occupier must not use the lot, or permit it to be used, so as to cause a hazard to the health, safety and security of an owner, occupier, or user of another lot.

## Recommendation 2:

Behaviour of owners, occupiers and invitees on common property

- » An owner or occupier of a lot must take all reasonable steps to ensure that guests of the owner or occupier do not behave in a manner likely to unreasonably interfere with the peaceful enjoyment of any other person entitled to use the common property.

## Should I disclose to the Strata Community that I am self-isolating and/or have been ordered to self-isolate?

No. Self-isolation itself is for your own protection.

## Should I disclose to the Strata Community that I have been infected with COVID-19?

Yes, you should disclose to your strata community manager if you have been diagnosed with COVID-19. Your identity and specific location will be kept confidential, but it does allow the Committee to notify any of the service contractors who may be impacted by your circumstance and give them opportunity to manage their own Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) as required. For example, they may be the waste management providers removing your rubbish for you or the Building Manager delivering your mail.

In addition, there are duties under the Workplace Health & Safety Act for which a Strata Community is responsible with respect to the common property and contractors that service the building. As all lot owners share the common property as tenants in common, those duties for disclosure, will extend to you as an owner or you as a landlord.

## What type of Policies may the Committee create?

The Committee is responsible for the management of the common areas and facilities and may need to create additional policies to manage the COVID-19 crisis.

These new policies may include:

1. **Delivery of parcels to your unit** – you may be required to instruct the courier to leave the parcel at the front of your apartment door, not in the lobby area. You will need to arrange how they get access to your floor etc.
2. **Visitors and visitors parking** – to manage the risk of exposure to other residents the committee may recommend restriction on the number of social visitors in line with government protocols, but certainly the visitor's carparks will be restricted for use by essential services like Doctors and medical services as a priority etc.
3. **Rubbish/waste** – you may be asked not to use the chute or rubbish room and to double bag the rubbish from your bin. Alternate collection methods may need to be implemented while you are house bound.
4. **Mail** – the committee may require you to make alternate arrangements for the delivery of mail.
5. **Shared facilities** – the committee may determine new access times (hours of operation and closure) of shared community facilities such as pools and gyms or shut them completely.
6. **Shared laundry facilities** – restricted use and/or closure of facilities may extend to communal laundries if residents do not adhere to the Government guidelines. Residents should be encouraged to take protective measures such as wearing gloves, washing their hands, not touching their face and disinfecting all surfaces of the machines they use. Maintain social distancing. Recommend use of the hot water setting and use of laundry detergents that contain a bleach compound. (Include advice to take into account the material being washed so clothes are not damaged).
7. **Meeting & Communication** – the committee may implement new meeting and communication protocols to minimise the potential spread of the virus and enable decisions of the Strata Community to continue to be made by an alternate means; *eg teleconference, on-line meetings, ballots.*

8. **Building Maintenance & Services** – the committee may determine to increase or reduce services to the building to minimise risks to residents; *eg increase cleaning regime, increase waste collection if all residents are staying home and the rubbish generated increases, employ security guards if there is a power failure and the entry/exit security systems stops working or garage doors etc.*

## What if I have pets?

Although our pets aren't getting sick, Covid-19 is changing the lives of pets especially for dogs living in apartments.

Under quarantine or self-isolating, dogs in apartments are going to need to do their business inside and if you use your balcony or shower for this, please "scoop the poop" and not wash it down the drain system and after toileting disinfect the area.

Make sure you keep up all the flea treatments as well. You don't need a flea outbreak at this time within the building.

When you become anxious or things change you might see an uptick in depressive behaviour like trouble sleeping, loss of appetite, not wanting to play or seeming listless. Other dogs might also become more destructive and anxious, exhibiting behaviour like increased reactivity, increased barking or difficulty settling. Try to set up a routine within your apartment and stick to it.

**SCA Ltd wish to acknowledge and thank SCA (VIC) for their contribution in the development of this best practice guideline.**

This publication is only a guide. Readers should make and rely on their own expert enquiries. No warranty is given about the accuracy of the material and no liability for negligence or otherwise is assumed by SCA, its servants or agents in any way connected with this publication.

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[Please visit Government Websites for regular updates.](#)

## Government Information – Useful Links

### COVID-19 Government Updates

These sites will link you to the latest Coronavirus news, updates and advice from government agencies

#### Australian Government

<https://www.australia.gov.au/>

Find out what actions your local community, employers and organisations can take to help reduce the risk of infection

#### WA

<https://www.wa.gov.au/government/coronavirus-covid-19>

### What you need to know about coronavirus (COVID-19)

Find out what you need to know about the coronavirus [here](#).

- [What is COVID-19](#)
- [Symptoms](#)
- [How to seek medical attention](#)
- [Testing](#)
- [Self-isolation \(self-quarantine\)](#)
- [Protect yourself and others](#)
- [Social distancing](#)
- [Who is most at risk](#)
- [How it spreads](#)
- [Resources](#)