

Cautious easing of restrictions thanks to WA's COVID-19 progress

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Indoor and outdoor gatherings for up to 10 people will be allowed including weddings, outdoor personal training, and open house or display village inspections
Easing of some of WA's stage 3 restrictions effective Monday, April 27 2020
Changes follow the encouraging and successful response to the pandemic in WA
Allows families and friends to interact more freely, with good social distancing

Premier Mark McGowan and Health Minister Roger Cook have announced some of Western Australia's stage 3 restrictions will be relaxed effective Monday, 27 April 2020 to ensure families and friends can stay connected during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The changes, based on health advice, will mean indoor and outdoor non-work gatherings will be relaxed to enable for up to 10 persons, lifted from the two person only limit, following continued low number of new cases and the encouraging response to COVID-19 in WA.

Everyone should continue to practise appropriate social distancing and stay home except for:

- shopping for what you need, such as food or other necessary supplies;
- medical or health care needs, including compassionate requirements;
- exercise, including outdoor personal training without shared equipment;
- training or university study, where remote learning is unavailable;
- childcare or school;
- work;
- non-contact recreational activities such as private picnics in the park, fishing, boating, hiking and camping - all in compliance with travel restrictions and the 10-person rule;
- home opens and display village openings, with appropriate record keeping and hygiene practices in place, and in compliance with the 10-person rule.

A maximum of 10 people will be allowed at weddings, funerals, outdoor personal training (no shared equipment), home opens and display village inspections as part of these changes.

The two person only restriction was initially implemented from March 30 for a month with the intention to review the situation fortnightly to see if measures could be adjusted.

The new 10-person rule aligns WA with South Australia. The two-person rule was adopted in WA, going further than what was recommended at the time in a bid to curb the spread of COVID-19.

If a single household has more than 10 people, that household remains exempt from this new rule.

All public playgrounds, skate parks and outdoor gym equipment are to remain closed.

All other restrictions will remain in place for now, in a bid to manage social distancing and better protect Western Australians.

Restaurants, cafés, food vans, food courts and road houses remain restricted to takeaway and home delivery.

These decisions are based on the best medical advice in the country and as outlined by National Cabinet restrictions could be in place for six months, but subject to regular review.

WA is in a State of Emergency and various restrictions are enforceable by fines of up to \$50,000 for individuals and \$250,000 for businesses. Police Officers also have the power to issue \$1,000 on-the-spot fines.

Comments attributed to Premier Mark McGowan:

"Relaxing some restrictions to allow for Western Australians to stay connected with their loved ones is a positive step, however it needs to be applied with common sense.

"The changes are sensible and reasonable, and are designed to provide a high value social impact.

"Western Australians have done such a great job so far, although these changes are small, I hope it will be of benefit to many Western Australians - they deserve it.

"The limitations on seeing family and friends over the past month have been difficult for many of us and particularly isolating for some.

"It is rewarding, because people will now have more choice if they want to interact with their family and friends.

"While we've had some outstanding results recently, we need to remain vigilant.

"Any complacency will undo all our efforts in stemming the virus in Western Australia.

"We had to apply some of the most rigorous and tough restrictions including shutting Western Australia off to the rest of the world to keep Western Australians safe. The results so far have been encouraging and has now allowed for us to make some adjustments."

Comments attributed to Health Minister Roger Cook:

"Western Australians have been helpful, compliant and recognised we need to work together during these trying times as we've battled COVID-19.

"Our numbers may be low but we need to keep it that way, so we can learn to live with COVID-19.

"This could see some increases in cases, but this should not be seen as an automatic trigger to reverse the relaxation of restrictions - it will be closely monitored by WA Health using expert Public Health analysis.

"The containment of this disease has been possible through a range of measures, heightened social distancing, enhanced case identification, contact tracing, enforcement of isolation and quarantine and State border and regional border closures.

"We're now able to make these adjustments to our restrictions based on the best of medical advice, local epidemiology and on ground surveillance of any community transmission."

Premier's office - 6552 5000

Health Minister's office - 6552 6500