



Safety Note

18 March 2020

Social Distancing in Libraries – reducing the transmission of COVID-19

What is social distancing

Social distancing includes ways to stop or slow the spread of infectious diseases. It means less contact between you and other people.

Why is it important?

Social distancing is important because COVID-19 is most likely to spread from person-to-person through:

- direct 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, or
- 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.

So, the more space between you and others, the harder it is for the virus to spread.

What you should do?

If you are sick, stay away from others and stay at home – that is the most important thing you can do.

You should also practise good hand and sneeze/cough hygiene:

- wash your hands frequently with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitiser, before and after eating, after going to the toilet and after sharing items.
- cover your cough and sneeze, dispose of tissues, and wash your hands with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitiser, and
- avoid close contact with others (i.e. stay more than 1.5 metres from people).

As well as these, you can start a range of social distancing and low cost hygiene actions now.

These simple, common sense actions help reduce risk to you and to others. They will help to slow the spread of disease in the community – and you can use them every day.

Principles social distancing while studying

- Stay at home if you are sick
- Practise reasonable social distancing which, in this case, means avoiding unnecessary close contact with others, attempting to keep a distance of at least 1.5 metres between people.
- Reduce other opportunities for direct transmission e.g. sharing items, unnecessary touching.
- Ensure impeccable personal hygiene practices.



Recommendations / Actions

1. Most importantly, stay home if you feel ill.
2. Consider spacing within the physical environment. Maintain 1.5 meters between you and others.
3. Avoid sharing equipment as the virus can live on surfaces including pens, keyboards, table tops etc.
4. Stop the practice of handshaking or hugging as a greeting
5. Hold study groups or group assignment chats outside in the open air if possible
6. Have good hand and sneeze/cough hygiene and use hand sanitisers and soap and water often.
7. Take lunch outside rather than at a desk.
8. Don't share food
9. Regularly wash your hands before and after eating and after going to the toilet as a minimum.
10. Avoid queuing at coffee shops or food outlets.
11. Dispose of tissues immediately in the general waste bin, don't leave rubbish on tables.
12. Cancel or postpone any non-essential face to face meeting OR use technology, Zoom, Skype FaceTime or email.
13. Avoid touching your face with your fingers.
14. Meet people outdoors where possible
15. Don't eat or drink in the library
16. If food outlets provide apps, order coffee and meals via the app to avoid queuing.

Resource and links

- [COVID-19 \(coronavirus\) advice for the UQ community](#)
- [Australian Government Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) – Information on social distancing \](#)
- [Australian Government Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) – Resources](#)