



**Executive Council of
Australian Jewry**

Community response to Coronavirus
17 March 2020

These are extraordinary times for our community and our nation. We are all living under the strain of upended daily routines, concerns for our loved ones, and a situation that is both uncertain and rapidly evolving.

One of the key functions of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry and its State and Territory roof bodies, and of course our CSGs, has always been to ensure that we as a community are resilient and prepared in difficult times.

Leadership groups in different States are engaging in regular consultations with our synagogues, schools, care facilities, service providers and other institutions to assist and coordinate in the adoption of prudent measures to best protect members of our community and our society, and to deal with potential long-term implications should this situation continue for an extended period of time. The ECAJ Executive will shortly be meeting to facilitate co-operation between these groups across Australia.

Identifying our most vulnerable

While Jewish organisations are well-placed to handle any difficult situation concerning their members, employees and other stakeholders, we are mindful of those in our community who are highly vulnerable, including those who are elderly or infirm and live independently, including hundreds in public housing. As some families begin to avoid non-essential outings, it is these most vulnerable who might begin to feel particularly isolated and anxious, and whose needs will be greatest, in terms of obtaining basic household items and medicines.

The strength of our community comes from our sense of mutual responsibility to one another. We are also blessed with outstanding volunteers and professionals in care-providing organisations who are ready to assist anyone in need.

We urge members of our community who are not currently receiving assistance and are having difficulties with shopping, obtaining medicines, or are experiencing emotional or psychological distress, to reach out to us, either by phone or email, so that through our state constituent bodies we may direct them to the individual or organisation in our community who is best placed to offer immediate assistance.

Call for volunteers

In anticipation of possible further restrictions on gatherings and an extended disruption to daily lives, we are also calling for members of our community to come forward to volunteer in the provision of basic assistance to our neediest, which might

include delivering groceries to the elderly or simply placing regular phone calls to those living alone.

If you are able to volunteer in some capacity, we ask you to please send your details to the contacts listed below and we will work with our state representative bodies and care-providers to match volunteers to community needs.

Contact:

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Contact:

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