

## **NOTICE - COVID-19**

Please do not visit the KHS if you have symptoms of respiratory illness or have recently arrived in Australia from high-risk areas or have been in contact with high-risk people.

We will attempt to assist you through electronic means at [khs@relics.com](mailto:khs@relics.com) or phone

(03) 9758 6722

Our Response to COVID-19 can be found on our website

[khs-relics.com](http://khs-relics.com)

13 March 2020

**Please do not visit the Knox Historical Society if you have been exposed to COVID-19 – the self-imposed quarantine period is 14 days after a “medium” or “high-risk” exposure to the virus which generally means having been in close contact with someone who is known to be infected, or having travelled from a high-risk region.**

Knox Historical Society is a responsible and caring, volunteer-based, not-for-profit organisation, which is also not classed by governments as an essential service. In response to the COVID 19 outbreak the following procedures have been implemented by the President and Committee to take effect immediately.

Our response will be updated as new information comes to hand.

Volunteers must:

- take reasonable care for their own health and safety
- take reasonable care for the health and safety of persons who may be affected by the employee’s acts or omissions at a workplace
- co-operate with their employer with respect to any action taken by the employer to comply with a requirement imposed by or under the OHS Act

We ask that all volunteers to be vigilant and to change their habits where necessary to minimise risk to themselves and to others.

We also ask all volunteers to notify us immediately, if they:

- have travelled to an affected area since the beginning of 2020; and/or
- are suffering, or have suffered, flu-like symptoms since the virus was first detected.

If any volunteers are exposed to the COVID-19 then Knox Historical Society bars them from returning to the workplace for a period 14 days after a “medium” or “high-risk” exposure to the virus — generally meaning having been in close contact with someone who is known to be infected, or having travelled from a high-risk region.

## **HOW TO AVOID COVID-19**

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19 disease. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. The World Health Organization has confirmed that the main driver of transmission is from symptomatic patients, through respiratory droplets from coughing and sneezing. Transmission by people without symptoms is possible, but rare. It may also be possible to become infected by touching a contaminated surface or object and then touching one’s nose or mouth.

Everyone at Knox Historical Society should implement these everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases:

- Avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms
- Stay home when you are sick – especially if you exhibit respiratory symptoms (coughing, sneezing, shortness of breath) and/or a temperature above 38C.
- Leave work if you develop these symptoms while at the workplace
- See a health care professional if you are unwell, and stay away from the workplace and other public places
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Shield coughs and sneezes with a tissue, elbow, or shoulder (not the bare hands) & dispose of used tissues immediately.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or, if soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser with at least 60% alcohol.
- Always wash hands with soap and water before eating and after visiting the toilet and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Wipe down shared equipment (phones, laptops etc) with a sanitising wipe before and after use.
- Avoid shaking hands entirely to reduce the risk of spreading infection. Though this might at first be awkward, it's increasingly common practice in hospitals and clinics.
- Try to maintain 1.5m distance from other people.
- Volunteers may want to reconsider their communal lunch-breaks.

The Knox Historical Society will:

- Keep its toilets well stocked with toilet paper, soap and paper towels. (There is some evidence that paper towel drying is less likely to spread viruses.
  - Distribute sanitising wipes throughout the workplace for users to sanitise shared equipment.
  - And all frequently touched surfaces such as workstations, countertops, shared pens and pencils, light-switches and doorknobs, kitchen equipment & taps will be routinely cleaned.
  - Increase cleaning of common areas using standard cleaning agents.
  - Display COVID-19 information material in our reception area / in email footers consistent with guidance coming from the WHO about our expectations of members and customers of what they should do whilst in our workplace.
  - Send all volunteers and members information on the Knox Historical's response and expectations. And provide regular updates.
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- Monitor the spread of COVID-19 and implement more restrictions if necessary (eg cancelling events, holding meetings by Skype so that those attending don't have to travel on public transport) A note on facemasks. They are not recommended for people to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19. However, facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).

## **SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19 AND NORMAL FLU**

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), common symptoms of **COVID-19** infection include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Fatigue
- Shortness of breath
- Breathing difficulties

In severe cases, symptoms become more advanced:

- Severe acute respiratory syndrome
- Kidney failure pneumonia
- Death

To highlight the difficulty of accurately describing COVID-19 symptoms, around 5% of cases report a sore throat and runny nose, while a small percentage also report diarrhoea and vomiting.

### **Influenza**

Influenza has been widely researched and most Australians are probably already familiar with its symptoms. However, according to WHO, they can include:

- Fever (often with abrupt onset)
- Chills
- Sore throat
- Cough
- Headache
- Muscle pain

While COVID-19 is of concern, it is important to remember that most people displaying symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat or tiredness are likely suffering with a cold or other respiratory illness—not COVID-19.

It is extremely difficult to form an adequate assessment of a novel COVID-19 that hasn't had time to settle into the human population. As a new disease, it is possible that it may have a higher death rate as few people will have a defence against it.

Generally speaking, approximately 0.05% of people who contract influenza will die from it. Some very rough estimates of COVID-19 lethality put the death rate at 2%, approximately 40 times higher than that of the flu. However, there

is very little value in such estimates at this stage of the disease's progression and it is more likely to drop rather than increase, particularly as treatments improve and previously mild, undiagnosed cases are also counted.

## **WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT YOU HAVE COVID-19 OR THE FLU**

If you believe that you have COVID-19, book a doctor's appointment, and make it clear, when booking your appointment, that you are concerned you may have symptoms of COVID-19. The receptionist will tell you what to do in terms of isolation, possibly organise some testing, and ensure that you're ok.

Put yourself into home-quarantine until your test results come back.

Contact the Knox Historical Society and let us know that you are being tested for the COVID-19 and you will not be attending the Knox Historical Society for the required number of days and, please, keep us informed as it has repercussions beyond your own well-being.

If any volunteers are exposed to the COVID-19 then the Knox Historical Society bars them from returning to the workplace for a period 14 days after a "medium" or "high-risk" exposure to the virus — generally meaning having been in close contact with someone who is known to be infected, or having travelled from a high-risk region.

Kind regards,

Committee,

Knox Historical Society Inc.