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**COVID-19 - ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT
AVAILABLE TO CHURCHES AND CHARITIES
THRIVING SESSION
8 APRIL 2020**

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OVERVIEW



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- Continuing ministry during COVID-19
- Churches, Coronavirus & family law
- Cancellation of conferences / Easter gatherings
- Church office spaces & social distancing requirements
- Re-purposing existing spaces

Continuing Ministry During COVID-19



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- On 3rd April, Churches were classified as 'Workplaces'.
 - 2 ppl public gathering limit does not apply.
 - Services may be conducted so long as:
 - Only essential staff are present
 - The venue/facility remains closed to the public
 - 4 sqm rule is adhered to
 - Services include normal church and youth events.

Continuing Ministry During COVID-19



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PM Media Statement dated 3 April 2020 (emphasis added)

■ Religious Services

- Churches and other places of worship, will be considered places of work so that services can be live streamed to the community. This will ensure that religious services, **including** Easter services, remain accessible to congregations. National Cabinet agreed that providing access to services is important for a sense of continuity and social connection.
- Services may be conducted and live streamed providing only essential staff are present, the venue/facility remains closed to the public, and social distancing principles are adhered to.
- Any church wishing to conduct religious services, including Easter services, must use the minimum number of participants required to deliver and live stream the service, which may include a priest, attendants, organist, videographer and sound recordist

Continuing Ministry During COVID-19



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- Social Distancing and normal 'Workplace' rules apply:
 - Signs and posters placed around the 'workspace'
 - Proper hygiene and cleanliness practices
 - Avoiding contact with others
 - Spending time outside rather than inside
 - Increasing ventilation
 - Limiting the sharing and handling of food
 - Supplying soap and sanitizer

Continuing Ministry During COVID-19



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- Recording and Live-Streaming Services

- Why?

- Encourages routine, community and participation

- How?

- Facebook, YouTube or other platforms
- No need for fancy equipment
- Strong internet connection
- Cross checking audio and visuals
- Technological support system/team

Churches, Coronavirus & Family Law



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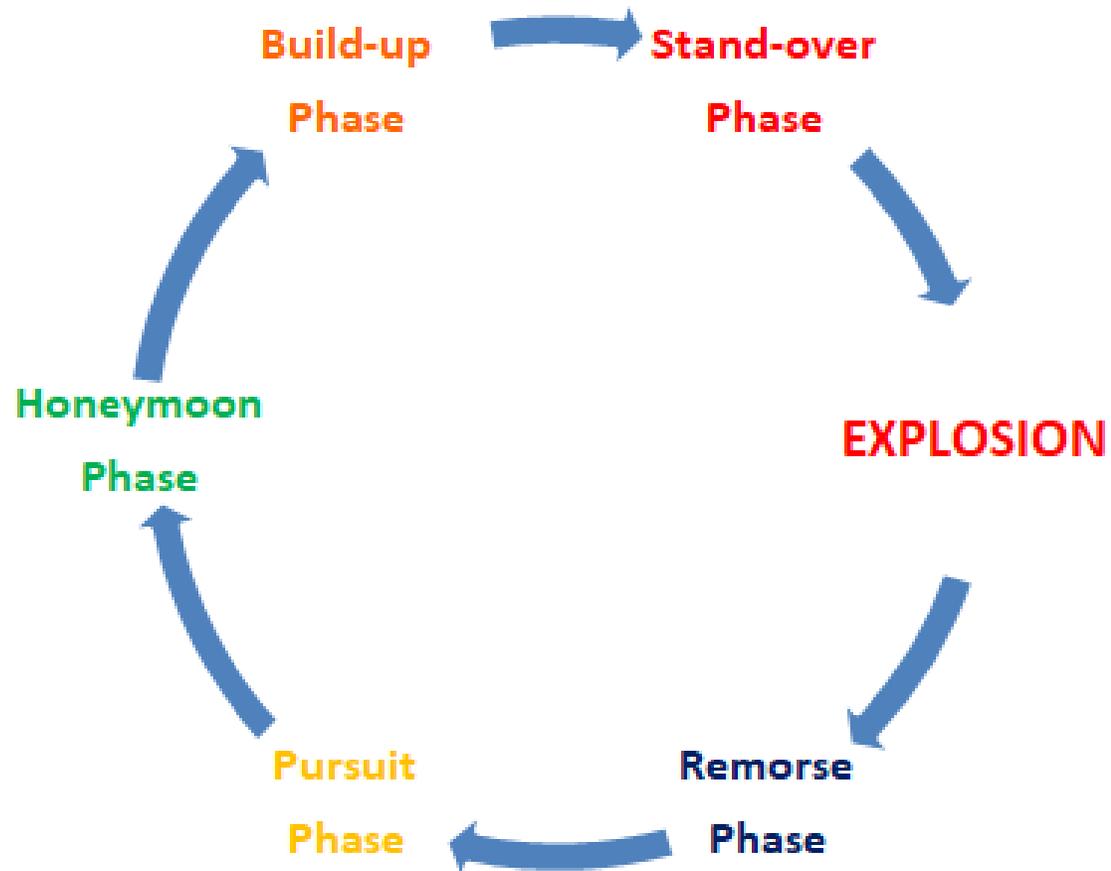
- Brief overview of family law
- Domestic and family violence needs to be considered in relation to the effects of coronavirus and social isolation.
- Do you know the difference between genuine remorse and the usual stages of domestic violence

Churches, Coronavirus & Family Law



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The cycle of violence:



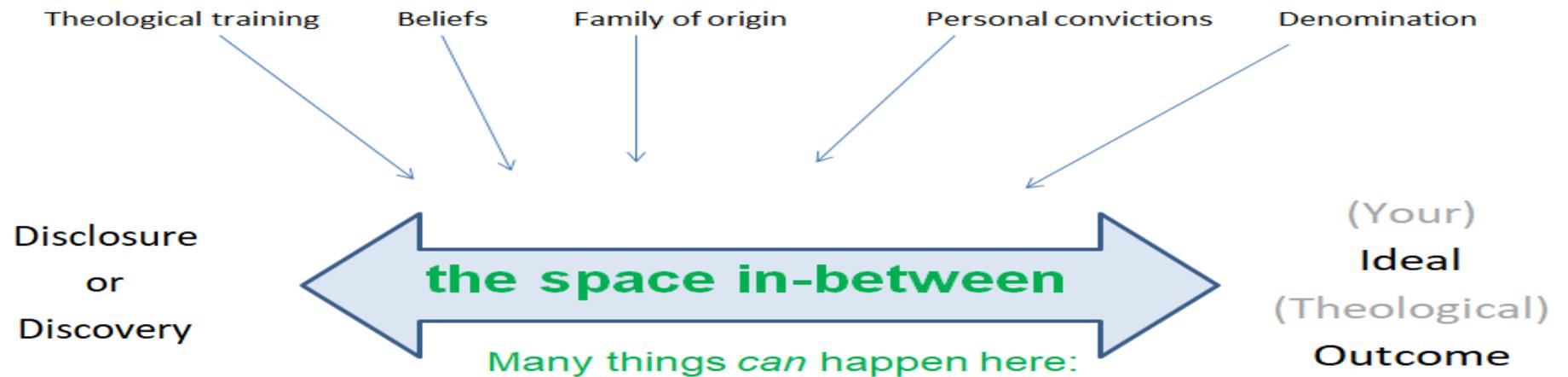
For Pastors and Church Workers: *Do you know the difference between genuine remorse, repentance, and the usual stage of the DV cycle?*

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- When you have become aware that there is or has been a separation, divorce or that domestic violence is occurring – you enter the space between.



- Conversations
- Advice
- Decisions
- Referrals
- Prayers
- Ministry
- Encouragement

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- Your "first aid" response to domestic violence
 - Safety
 - Practical help
 - Referral / seek help
- We have developed the Family Tree model of care combining:
 - Counselling
 - Support workers, referrals and education services
 - Family legal services

moving through family transition with peace and integrity

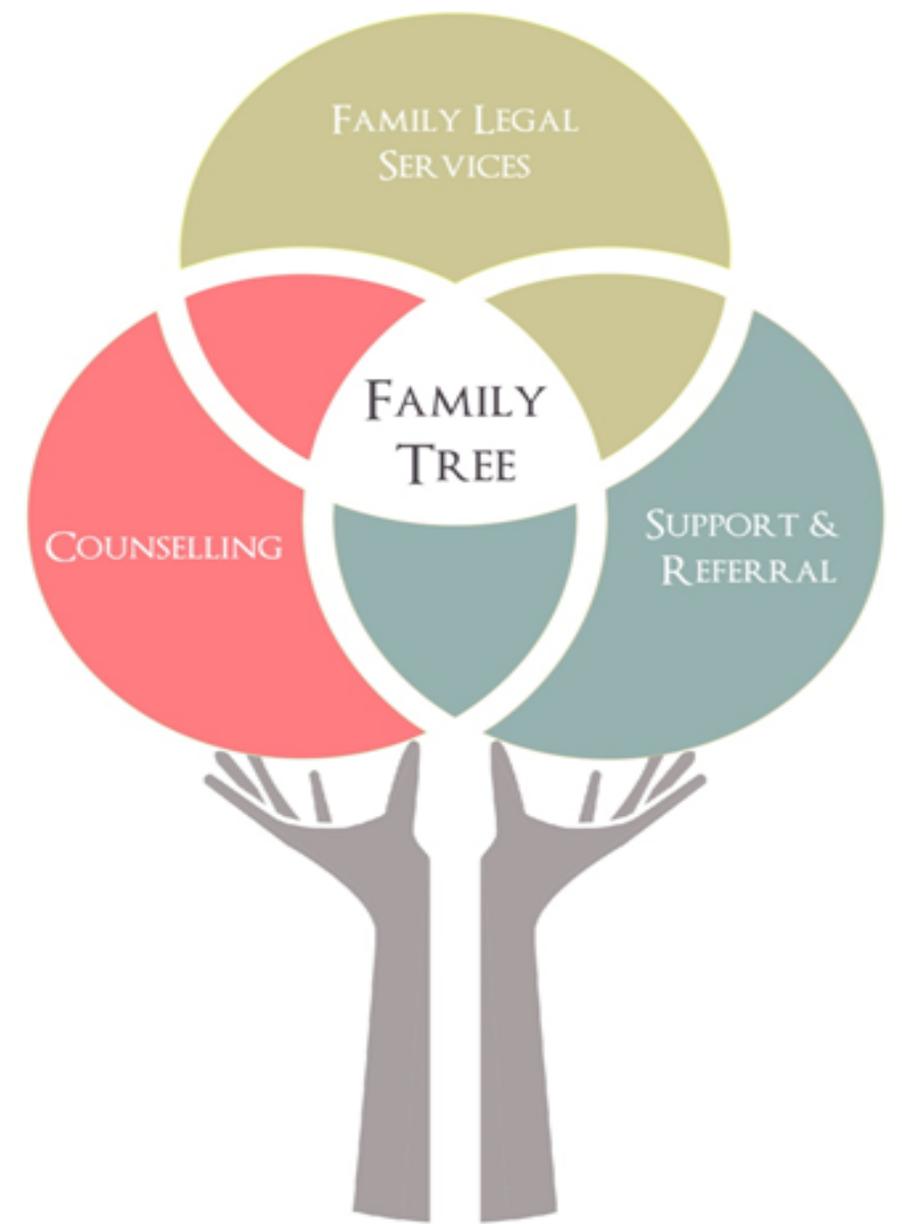
The Family Tree is a unique offering to clients going through separation or divorce.

It is our conviction that the legal issues that arise from separation are only one part of the picture.

So we have developed a model of care to meet people's needs.

Our family lawyers are part of a wider network of support for clients which includes:

1. counselling
2. support workers, referrals and education services



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- Suggested 3 step process for dealing with family law or domestic violence issues
 - Safety First
 - Ensure your and the other persons safety
 - Create a safe environment
 - Provide practical help
 - Shopping services
 - Emergency meals
 - Emotional support
 - Assist them to link in with existing church groups
 - Referral / seek help
 - Counselling
 - Medical
 - Food banks
 - Law firms
 - DV Services

Cancellation of conferences and gatherings



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■ Contract frustration

- Contract incapable of being performed due to circumstances which render it radically different from that originally undertaken.
- Neither party must be at fault.
- Coronavirus must result in contract being incapable of being performed not merely more costly to perform.
- Application differs depending on terms of the contracts.
- Common instances where it might apply:
 - Contemplated method of performance no longer possible
 - Change in law renders performance illegal
- Remedy is termination, all rights & remedies unenforceable.

Cancellation of conferences and gatherings



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- Force Majeure
 - Act of God or nature
 - Specific terms for each contract. Need to establish whether clause applies
 - Results in suspension of an obligation or termination of the contract

Socially Distant Churches



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- Qld Chief Health Officer's *Non-essential business, activity and undertaking Closure Direction (No. 4)*

| Column 1 Business, activity, undertaking, premises or place | Column 2 Exceptions |
|---|---|
| Places of worship, weddings and funerals | Weddings with a maximum attendance of 5 people being the celebrant, couple and two witnesses with no more than one person per 4 square metres. Funerals attended by a maximum of 10 people with no more than one person per 4 square metres, except if an exemption is granted on compassionate grounds by the Chief Health Officer. |

Socially Distant Pastors



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- Qld Chief Health Officer's *Home Confinement, Movement and Gathering Direction*:
 6. *A person who resides in Queensland must not leave their principal place of residence except for, and only to the extent reasonably necessary to accomplish, the following permitted purposes:*
 - d. *to perform work or volunteering, or carry out or conduct an essential business, activity or undertaking, and the work, business activity or undertaking to be performed is of a nature that cannot reasonably be performed from the person's principal place of residence;*

The "Church Office" New Normal in Pastoral Care



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- Places of Worship are non-essential and closed.
- Not being excluded, presumably, pastoral care services remain "essential" work.
- Pastors are permitted to leave their homes where it is not possible to do that work from home (para 6.d. *Home Confinement Movement and Gathering Direction*).
- Arguably, Pastors are permitted as workers to visit residences but must exercise social distancing as reasonably practicable (para 10 and 13 *Home Confinement Movement and Gathering Direction*).
- **BUT...**

The "Church Office" New Normal in Pastoral Care



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- Movement Directions are far from clear and can change quickly – and it is best to avoid being the test case, or the case that causes difficulty for others.
- Best practice in view of other paragraphs in *Home Confinement Movement and Gathering Direction* that do not apply to workers:
 - Avoid meeting in-person altogether, **especially the vulnerable**. Adopt other mediums of contact.
 - Where not possible meet, if outdoors, meet one-on-one.
 - Where not possible meet, in residences, bring only one other, but preferably one-on-one.
 - When meeting in person, adopt best practices of social distancing (4 sq m apart, avoiding touching etc.)
 - Always have a reasonable excuse if meeting in person, including why the role could not be performed by distance.

Repurposing Space



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- Qld Chief Health Officer's *Non-essential business, activity and undertaking Closure Direction (No. 4)*

| Column 1 Business, activity, undertaking, premises or place | Column 2 Exceptions |
|--|---|
| Community and recreation centres | Facilities may remain open for the purpose of hosting essential voluntary or public services, such as food banks or homeless services, with social distancing observed |
| Libraries, community centres, and youth centres | Community hubs in remote communities may continue to operate if they are essential for distributing health or medical information or education to the community, with social distancing observed. |

OP Shops, Food Banks and Community Care Services



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8. *Community hub* means:

- a. a facility in a remote or discrete community acting as a place of refuge or evacuation place in a disaster; or
- b. a community facility in an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community that provides essential activities or services relating to child care, youth, harm minimisation and diversion.

Re-Purposing Church Spaces



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- Public Worship is closed.
- Live-streaming subject to best-practice social distancing is permitted.
- Essential public services such as food banks or homeless services is permitted, social distancing to be observed.
- Cafes are open as long as food/drink is take-away and social distancing observed.
- Child Care
 - Still open to parents
 - Services will be free to parents and supported by the government

Questions and Answers



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15 Minutes



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CLOSING PRAYER

Contact



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Next General Churches Webinar

TUESDAY

16th June 2020 @ 12:30pm

Responding to current and historical sexual abuse claims

– and how the new legislative amendments affect Churches

[Link: corneyandlind.com.au/responding-to-current-and-historical-sexual-abuse-claims-and-how-the-new-legislative-amendments-affect-churches/](https://corneyandlind.com.au/responding-to-current-and-historical-sexual-abuse-claims-and-how-the-new-legislative-amendments-affect-churches/)

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