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Evangelical Churches

# Leadership in Lockdown





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## Psalm 103v1-5

- We stop praising God because we forget his benefits
- Remember God forgives, heals, redeems, crowns, satisfies, renews
- Our praise should be wholehearted because his benefits are comprehensive

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## Understanding and Applying the 'Rule of Six'





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## Unlawful gatherings

- Gatherings of 6 or more people
- Larger households & extended households
- 'Qualifying groups' of up to 6 can be in same premises/place
- 'Mingling' between qualifying groups makes the gathering unlawful

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## Social Distancing

- The 'rule of 6' does not change the guidance on social distancing
- Social distancing in a 'qualifying group' between members from different households
- Social distancing between social groups
- Mingling is not the same as maintaining social distance
- Mingling = socially interacting in some way between groups

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## Exemptions

- Some gatherings are exempt from the 'rule of 6'
- Mingling between attenders is not then unlawful
- Social distancing between households should be observed
- Weddings, funerals, "special life events" – but maximum 30
- Work & Education
- 'Support Groups' – up to 30
- "provision of voluntary or charitable services"

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## When do the exceptions apply for church meetings?

- Ordinary Bible Studies/Prayer Meeting – not 'support group' or education
- Worship services, Bible Studies & Prayer Meetings – not 'provision of charitable services'
- Church staff team meetings are work
- Elders meeting might be work/provision of charitable services
- Church business meetings – might be provision charitable services
- Staff leading a group may be work or provision charitable services
- Pastor's fraternal meeting/preaching group might be work

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## Church meetings in private dwellings

- Unlawful if more than 6 people (or large single household) unless exempt
- Private dwelling includes garden/outhouses, etc.
- Small Bible Study/Prayer Meetings in homes
- Social distancing to be observed between participants (2m or 1m+)
- If organised by church need for risk assessment
- Ensure everyone happy to attend and understands how social distancing will be observed
- Advise over 70s and vulnerable stay at home

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## Is there an absolute limit of 6 people in private dwellings?

- 6 people in dwelling at same time
- 6 people meeting downstairs while children asleep upstairs
- 6 people in lounge while teenagers in another room
- 6 people in garden while 6 in the house

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# Worship Services in the Place of Worship

- More than 6 people can be present
- But must be in 'qualifying groups' that do not mingle
- Social distancing should be observed between members of a group from different households
- Social distancing should be observed between groups
- Not a change in previous requirements – now law not guidance
- Key issue is 'mingling' between groups
- Intended to prevent social interaction outside group
- 'Mingling' = chatting between groups even if socially distanced
- 'Mingling' will include moving between groups during the 'gathering'

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## Other Church Meetings in the Place of Worship

- Any other meetings can be held in the place of worship
- Must remain in 'qualifying groups' and not mingle
- Bible Study discussion between qualifying group of 6
- ? Prayer Meeting interaction between group of 6
- ? Church business meetings exempt from need separate groups of 6

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## Penalties

- Individuals who gather unlawfully can be fined £100 - £3,200
- Church leaders may break health and safety laws
- ? Organisers of unlawful gathering may face fixed penalty £10,000

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