



Honourable Yvette D'Ath MP  
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice  
Leader of the House

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Mr Luke Murphy  
President  
Queensland Law Society  
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Dear Mr Murphy

I refer to recent discussions between our offices in relation to concerns about the effect of the Chief Health Officer's (CHO) directions on your members. I thank you for raising those concerns.

In Queensland, the CHO's *Non-essential business, activity and undertaking Closure direction (No. 4)* ("the direction") implements the National Cabinet's strong guidance for all Australians to stay home unless for:

- shopping for what you need - food and necessary supplies;
- medical or health care needs, including compassionate requirements;
- exercise in compliance with the public gathering requirements; or
- work and study if you cannot work or learn remotely.

Regarding work, the direction permits Queenslanders who are employed in an essential business activity or undertaking to leave their home to attend their place of work where they cannot reasonably work from home.

An essential business activity or undertaking means any business or activity that is not classified as non-essential by the direction.

In short, this means if an activity or undertaking is not identified in the non-essential business closure direction list and your members cannot reasonably perform the task from home, your members may continue to go to work, as long as social distancing is observed. Depending on the specific circumstances, this may mean physically attending a courthouse for a hearing or physical attendance at a property settlement, however, it is important that your members adhere to the CHO's directions whilst doing so.

To date, the duties performed by the legal profession are not classified as non-essential - to see the full direction please click on the following link: <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/legislation/cho-public-health-directions-under-expanded-public-health-act-powers/non-essential-business,-activity-and-undertaking-closure-direction-no.4>

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Please note, your members should be aware that any Public Health direction may change in the future as the response to COVID-19 escalates.

To stay up-to-date with the CHO's latest directions, I recommend your members visit: <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/legislation/cho-public-health-directions-under-expanded-public-health-act-powers>

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Yvette D'ATH". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'Y'.

**YVETTE D'ATH MP**  
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice  
Leader of the House