



Executive Council of Australian Jewry



COVIDSafe Contact App

Dear Rabbonim and Synagogue Presidents,

As you will no doubt be aware, the Australian government has released a new coronavirus contact app, called COVIDSafe. The contact app will allow health officials to tell people who have downloaded and activated the app if they have come into close contact with someone who is diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus.

For those who have become infected with coronavirus, the app will assist health officials to notify other people with whom they have been in close contact, so they can self-quarantine and get tested.

This will speed up current manual processes and make it quicker to stop the spread of the virus, particularly as restrictions are eased.

The app is completely voluntary but will require at least 40% of Australians to adopt it in order to be effective.

When the launch of the app was announced, the Executive Council of Australian Jewry wrote to the Prime Minister to raise enquiries about potential issues surrounding data protection and privacy, matters that have been of heightened concern for our community for historical reasons.

On the basis of the government's subsequent statements and a review of the [CORONAVIRUS CONTACT APP FAQs](#) document, which provides detailed information about how the app works, as well as the privacy and security aspects, we are satisfied that the app will be of great benefit to our community (particularly given its close interconnectedness) as well as our country. While we acknowledge that no system is perfect and we await the actual legislation which is due to be passed in the May sittings of Parliament it is our view that the risk of misuse is slight compared to the health and social benefits of rapid, comprehensive and accurate contact by health officials with people who might have been exposed to infection.

We have therefore made public statements strongly encouraging members of our community to download and activate this app. The signatories to this letter have already personally done so.

We ask that you also consider writing to your congregants to encourage them to download the app. Feel free to enclose this letter if you feel it may be of benefit.

If this app means that we can ease social distancing and restrictions on movement, and begin a transition back to normal practices, including the public gatherings and interactions that are central to the well-being and way of life of our community, then it is worthy of our active support.

The app can be downloaded from the **Apple App Store** or on **Google Play**.

Lesli Berger,
President, NSW Jewish Board of Deputies

Jillian Segal AM
President, Executive Council of Australian Jewry

Stephen Chipkin
President, JCA

