

## COVID-19 Walk Protocols – March 2021 update

This information sheet focuses on precautions we must all take when walking with Ramblers, whether as a leader or participant. All of us need to make our own decisions on whether we wish to lead or participate in a walk. A key source of information that we strongly advise everyone to consult when making these decisions is the comprehensive NSW Health Coronavirus webpage: <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/diseases/Pages/coronavirus.aspx>

Please note that as participant numbers are limited, we are all **required to book directly with leaders** for each walk, using the contact details provided in the Walks Programme or Short Notice Walk e-mails.

### Protecting fellow Ramblers

#### Do not join an activity if you:

- are required to self-isolate (e.g. due to travel or known exposure to COVID-19)
- suspect you are infected or are awaiting test results
- have any flu-like symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, body aches, sore throat, headache or runny nose)
- are a vulnerable person. (Keep up-to-date with NSW Health information on who is vulnerable. If unsure, seek your doctor's advice.)

#### Leaders' choice

- Some leaders will decide that leading walks is still too high-risk for them at the moment. We very much support anyone making that choice.
- Consider sharing details of some of your regular walks with other leaders who may be able to offer them in your place.

#### Being prepared for changes

- Leaders may need to cancel a walk at short notice if they are unwell. Please support them in putting their health, and that of fellow Ramblers, first.
- Walks might be curtailed or suspended if government directives are altered.

### Social distancing

#### Avoiding physical contact

- Make sure you keep at least 1.5 metres from other people and avoid physical contact of any kind
- Create extra space away from people who are sneezing or coughing
- Continue to be conscious of physical distancing when walking along wider paths, tracks or fire trails
- On narrower bush tracks, step off the track to let other people pass.

#### Travelling to and from a walk

- Where leaders are able to offer circuit walks, participants who wish to avoid public transport could use the option of travelling to and from the walk by car
- If needing to use public transport, make sure you have a mask (even if there is a change to the current mandatory requirement), as this provides additional reassurance when travelling over varying distances to the walk destination
- Leaders might consider starting weekday walks a little later and/or finishing them earlier to minimise the impact of peak hour travel.

#### Car-sharing

- This should generally be restricted to the driver and one passenger, or two in a larger car
- Maintain physical separation of those in the car as much as possible (e.g. have the passenger sit in the back seat diagonally opposite the driver's position)
- As with public transport, minimise shared car time as much as possible.

### **'No touch' sign-on process**

- Leaders will record all participants' names on the sign-on sheet. This process can be assisted by intending walk participants providing their basic contact information to the leader prior to the walk.
- The standard waiver, with an additional reference to current circumstances, will be read out so that people understand the risks. Leaders will note on the sign-on sheet that people have given their assent to this. *A copy of the amended risk waiver is attached to this information sheet, and is accessible via Ramblers' website home page* **Club Details:** [www.wearamblers.org.au](http://www.wearamblers.org.au)
- Leaders are asked to e-mail a photo / scanned copy of the sign-on sheet, if at all possible within 24hrs, to the Walks Co-ordinator at: [wearamblerssydney5@gmail.com](mailto:wearamblerssydney5@gmail.com)

### **Reduced group sizes**

- Leaders will set maximum numbers of participants on each of their walks, with the aim of providing a safe experience for all walkers, and to comply with Government directives.
- Leaders may choose to set a participant limit which is lower than current Government restrictions, depending on the type and location of the walk, and their own preferences.

### **Consider walking with friends**

- If you are not yet ready to join larger Ramblers' walks, these links might provide some ideas for organising walks with friends:  
<https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/>  
<http://www.wildwalks.com>  
<https://www.theurbanlist.com/sydney/a-list/sydneys-best-walks>  
<https://www.sydney.com/things-to-do/nature-and-parks/walks>

## **Focussing on personal hygiene to minimise infection and its spread**

### **Maintaining your hand-washing / sanitising routine**

- Wash your hands with soap and water (applying the 20 second rule), or use hand sanitiser with at least 60% alcohol, as often as needed. Please bring your own hand sanitiser on walks.
- Rewash / sanitise your hands after touching public surfaces (such as on trains / buses / trams, using handrails, or toilets)
- Rewash / sanitise your hands after sneezing or coughing.

### **Covering every cough & sneeze**

- Cover your sneezes and coughs (with your elbow or tissue)
- Dispose of tissues as soon as possible (use a plastic bag until you can dispose of them).

### **Avoiding touching your face**

- Because our eyes, mouth and nose are vulnerable to being a route for infection, always wash or sanitise your hands before touching your face.

### **Not sharing food or water**

- Carry plenty of water and food for yourself
- Do not share snacks or other food and drink.

## **Contact tracing**

WEA Ramblers Sydney will contact and advise members if we become aware of exposure.

### **If you are diagnosed with COVID-19**

Notify the WEA Ramblers Sydney President: [wearamblerssydney1@gmail.com](mailto:wearamblerssydney1@gmail.com) if you are diagnosed within three weeks of participating in a Ramblers' activity, or if otherwise advised by your doctor.

### **Using walk sign-on forms for contact tracing**

- As outlined in the 'No touch' sign-on procedure within the **Social distancing** section above, leaders will have e-mailed a photo / scan of sign-on sheets, listing all participants, to the Walks Co-ordinator immediately following a walk
- These sheets will be archived, as usual, when received by the Walks Co-ordinator, and may be used for later review, if required.

### **COVIDSafe app**

If you have chosen to put this app on your phone, please use it while walking with Ramblers.

**WEA Ramblers Sydney is indebted to NPA for kindly sharing their comprehensive walking-related COVID-19 research and guidelines, which have informed the development of these protocols.**

## WALKS RISK WAIVER

### In case of emergency, telephone 000

In voluntarily participating in this activity, I am aware that I am risking injury, illness and death, and loss of or damage to my property. Typical risks may include but are not limited to hyperthermia, hypothermia, slipping on loose or icy surfaces, slipping on rocks, falling rocks, exposure, snake bite, bee stings and other insect attacks, burns, drowning, stepping into unseen holes, accidents during vehicle travel to walks, navigation errors and becoming lost.

To minimise risks I will:

- inform myself of the nature of the activity and ensure that it is within my capabilities
- wear appropriate footwear and carry food, water, clothing and equipment appropriate for the particular walk
- advise the leader of any pre-existing conditions, physical or other limitations, or any dependence on medication that may require urgent attention during the activity
- make every effort to remain with the rest of the party during the activity
- advise the leader of any concerns I am having; and
- comply with all reasonable instructions of the leader.

In addition, I have read the current WEA Ramblers Sydney **COVID-19 Walk protocols** information sheet and confirm that I am not required to self-isolate under current Government regulations.

I also agree to adhere to all the requirements outlined in the current WEA Ramblers Sydney **COVID-19 Walk protocols** information sheet.

I understand all of the above risks and requirements and give my agreement to them.