



NEW SOUTH WALES STATE CORONER

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COVID-19 – CHANGES TO COURT OPERATIONS

The NSW Coroners Court recognises its responsibilities in reducing the risks associated with the spread of COVID-19.

It is essential the functions of the Forensic Medicine and Coroners Court Complex at Lidcombe are able to continue during the period of the pandemic. For this reason, precautions are in place to reduce the number of people attending the facility and to help ensure the safety of the broader community.

The NSW State Coroner Teresa O’Sullivan has implemented a number of changes to court proceedings to ensure the safe running of the entire facility and that all essential functions continue.

Only Coroners Court matters that can be conducted using technology to enable the appearance of parties, witnesses and family will proceed in the period up to 30 June 2020. Any inquests that need to be adjourned will be given a new inquest date. Families are being notified individually about the adjournment and new date.

All inquests that had been listed at country locations up until 30 June 2020 will be given new dates in due course.

We appreciate these changes may be distressing for families. Most of the families contacted have been very understanding and many are relieved they are not required to travel to attend court during the COVID-19 pandemic.

One of the key roles of the Coroners Court is determining how public safety can be improved and how future deaths can be prevented. With that responsibility, it is incumbent on the NSW Coroners Court to do what it can to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of the whole community.

As the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve rapidly, these changes will be reviewed and modified as required. A detailed assessment of these changes will take place in early June.

24 March 2020