



ועד הרבנים דאוסטרלאסיה
Rabbinical Association of Australasia

The Hon. Daniel Andrews MP
Premier of Victoria
cc: Hon. Martin Foley MP, Health Minister
Prof. Brett Sutton, Chief Health Officer
Mr. Jeroen Weimar, Commander, COVID Response Victoria

Monday 13th September 2021

Dear Premier,

I write on behalf of the Rabbinical Association of Australasia (RAA), the largest Jewish religious leadership body in the Southern Hemisphere, representing the Orthodox Rabbinate of Australia and New Zealand.

The Executive Committee of the RAA have reviewed the contents of the accompanying letter and wish to strongly endorse its content.

I wish to highlight the indispensable role that communal prayer plays in the lives of religiously Orthodox Jews and the genuine and sincere heartache caused by their inability to congregate to fulfil their religious duties of communal prayer.

Enormous sacrifices have been made by all Victorians since the onset of this pandemic, including by the Orthodox Jewish community. Most notable was the total absence of any form of communal prayer during the days of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur last year, as well as during Rosh Hashana this year.

This Wednesday evening marks Yom Kippur – the single holiest day of the Jewish year. An inability to gather in small groups during the hours of Yom Kippur while adopting COVID-safe practices to ensure the health and safety of participants, will prove devastating. We believe the measures suggested in the accompanying letter are entirely reasonable and workable and I would urge you to please consider working with the group of Rabbis who authored the letter, towards a mutually agreeable outcome.

Any assistance that may be provided towards this end would be deeply appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Rabbi Yaakov Glasman

President – RAA