



7 April 2020

Hello,

Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC) is introducing a COVID-19 Update to inform members and the broader Aboriginal community about our organisation's response to the pandemic, and to share important information on issues affecting Aboriginal people and Native Title groups.

You are receiving this update because you subscribe to YMAC e-news. If you don't want to receive these emails, email communications@ymac.org.au and we will remove you from the list.

In addition to this update, YMAC's website contains regular blog posts, media statements and advocacy updates being undertaken, as well as links to key government information available online. YMAC will be sourcing current information for this bulletin from government agencies and peak bodies, and encourage you to also visit these pages for further information:

Federal Government, including [Department of Health](#), [National Indigenous Australians Agency](#) and [Office of the Registrar of Aboriginal Corporations](#)

State Government, including [Health Department of WA](#), [Department of Communities](#) and WA Police.

World Health Organisation, [click here](#)

YMAC Update

Working from home arrangements

At present YMAC offices are partially closed across all locations, with staff working from home. This closure is part of a wider community effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19, for the health, safety and wellbeing of staff, clients, and the broader community.

Be assured that YMAC continues to deliver native title and corporate services. You can still contact individual staff via their email or via office reception [phone numbers](#). We are adapting to the changing situation and making use of technology such as Skype, teleconferencing and videoconferencing where possible.

Advocacy

In mid-March YMAC wrote to the WA Minister for Mines and Petroleum Bill Johnston about issues surrounding future acts, proponents and the inability to ensure full, prior and informed consent, and have face-to-face meetings with Traditional Owners during this time. We urged greater understanding and cooperation from his department to ensure they respond to reasonable requests made on behalf of native title holders.

In addition, YMAC has contacted Hon Ben Wyatt, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Lands; and Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage calling for postponement of the review of the Aboriginal Heritage Act (1972), to ensure the proposed amendment bill can have appropriate consultation with Traditional Owners.

COMMUNITY ACTION

RECOV19ER Working Group and Website

YMAC has joined the proactive Pilbara Aboriginal leaders who have helped to establish an emergency response working group: RECOV19ER. This group involves several local Aboriginal organisations, including a number of Prescribed Bodies Corporate from the region, government agencies and other service providers.

Current priorities of the working group are focussed on communicating correct information to the Pilbara Aboriginal community, especially those living in remote communities, and securing/confirming stores of essential supplies. Food security and access to health/medical/hygiene provisions are a priority.

To assist community a website has been created: www.recov19er.com.au. This is a resource for not only the Pilbara community, but others in WA being affected by the ongoing and frequent changes impacting regional and remote areas. Useful information, including government media releases and other community resources, will be updated on the website as it is released and/or provided to the working group.

HEALTH INFORMATION LINKS

As the COVID-19 situation is continually evolving, the following links are useful resources to provide you with the latest information and advice to keep yourself safe:

Australian Government: [Keep Our Mob Safe, Stop The Spread](#) - Information for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities on coronavirus (COVID-19) created by NIAA and Department of Health

West Australian Government [Coronavirus 2019 Health Alert](#) advice for public

World Health Organisation [Advice for Public](#) page

STATE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Over 50's please stay home

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over the age of 50 are being asked to self-isolate. This is because they are at greater risk of more serious illness if they contract coronavirus. [Click here](#) for more information;

WA is the first state to implement borders within borders, with travel between regions and to remote Aboriginal communities restricted to those with exemptions [click here](#) for more information on restrictions and border closures.

Funding and Support

The State Government has announced a \$1 billion COVID-19 economic and health relief package - [click here](#) for more information.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Coronavirus App

The Federal Government has recently released an app “Coronavirus Australia” that contains useful information. The app can be downloaded from the Apple Store and Google Play – follow the links via the Department of Health website [here](#).

Federal Court

Current Federal Court hearings have been vacated, and all other prospective on-Country matters (including consent determinations) have been postponed. This action impacts native title work related to a small number of claims managed by YMAC, who are being contacted directly by their claim lawyer.

ORIC

The Office of the Registrar for Indigenous Corporations (ORIC) has developed temporary provisions to support Prescribed Bodies Corporate in response to the challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic, including special rules for holding meetings and modifying rule books, as well as extension of time. Please visit the [ORIC website](#) for the most current information.

From everyone at YMAC, we hope you stay safe and well during this time.

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www.ymac.org.au www.recov19er.com.au