

# New Zealand COVID-19 Alert Levels

- The Alert Levels are determined by the Government and specify the public health and social measures to be taken in the fight against COVID-19. Further guidance is available on the [Covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz) website.
- The measures may be updated based on new scientific knowledge about COVID-19, information about the effectiveness of control measures in New Zealand and overseas, or the application of Alert Levels at different times (e.g. the application may be different depending on if New Zealand is moving down or up Alert Levels).
- Different parts of the country may be at different Alert Levels. We can move up and down Alert Levels.
- Essential services including supermarkets, health services, emergency services, utilities and goods transport will continue to operate at any level. Employers in those sectors must continue to meet health and safety obligations.
- Restrictions at the different Alert Levels are cumulative (e.g. at Alert Level 4, all restrictions at Alert Levels 1, 2 and 3 apply).

Published 7 May 2020

	ALERT LEVEL 1	ALERT LEVEL 2	ALERT LEVEL 3	ALERT LEVEL 4
OUTCOME	Keep out global pandemic. Population prepared for increase in alert levels if necessary.	Physical distancing and restrictions on gatherings to address sporadic cases or a cluster in New Zealand.	Further restrictions on activities, including at workplaces and socially, to address a high risk of transmission within New Zealand.	Strong restrictions to limit all people movement and contact to contain community transmission and outbreaks.
SUMMARY	Be prepared, and be vigilant. Border measures are in place. Public health measures in place, but no physical distancing is needed.	Businesses open, but physical distancing applies. Gatherings limited.	Stay at home, other than for essential personal movement, and going to work/school. Stay in extended bubble, which can now include close family or caregivers.	Stay at home, other than for essential personal movement and doing essential work. Stay in immediate household bubble.
Public health measures	No physical distancing requirements.	People should keep their distance from people they don't know in public (ideally 2 metres), with 1 metre physical distancing in other environments unless other mitigating measures are in place.	People encouraged to keep 2 metres apart outside home where possible (apart from with people within their extended bubble). This requirement does not apply to emergency and frontline public services (e.g. healthcare). In a controlled environment such as a workplace, 1 metre distancing is required.	People should keep 2 metres apart at all times outside home, including at workplaces. This requirement does not apply to emergency and frontline public services (e.g. healthcare).
<p><b>General public health advice:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regularly disinfect surfaces; wash and dry hands, cough and sneeze into elbow, don't touch your face; if you have cold or flu symptoms stay at home and ring Healthline or your GP.</li> </ul> <p><b>Contact tracing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing contact tracing for all confirmed and probable new cases of COVID-19, with appropriate isolation measures put in place.</li> </ul> <p><b>Testing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Testing of all potential cases of COVID-19 for people who meet the case definition (i.e. are displaying relevant symptoms). Tests will take place at dedicated Community-Based Assessment Centres or designated practices.</li> <li>• Random testing within communities (including for people who are asymptomatic) may be carried out locally to inform understanding on the spread of the virus in certain areas.</li> </ul> <p><b>Isolation and quarantine:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stringent self-isolation of those who display relevant symptoms of COVID-19, test positive for COVID-19, have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19, including quarantine/managed isolation for those who have been overseas in the last 14 days. Quarantine facilities mandated for those who do not have sufficient capacity to self-isolate effectively.</li> </ul> <p><b>Border:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robust border measures in place which safeguard against the risk of COVID-19 being transmitted into New Zealand. Currently, managed isolation or quarantine on arrival for 14 days before onward domestic travel.</li> </ul>				

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<b>Personal movement</b>	<p>No restrictions on personal movement.</p> <p>Sports and recreational activities allowed.</p>	<p><b>Leave home, but in a safe way.</b></p> <p>Participating in sports and recreational activities is allowed, subject to conditions, including, contact tracing, and – where practical – physical distancing.</p> <p>People at higher-risk of severe illness from COVID-19 (e.g. those with underlying medical conditions, especially if not well-controlled, may work and study, if they agree with their employer or education provider that they can do so safely.</p>	<p><b>People instructed to stay at home</b>, other than for essential personal movement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessing local services and businesses</li> <li>• Going to work or school (only for those who have to)</li> <li>• Low risk recreation in local area</li> <li>• Shared and extended bubble arrangements</li> <li>• Emergencies and giving effect to court orders</li> <li>• Travelling to permitted gatherings</li> <li>• Relocating a home or business</li> <li>• Medical reasons</li> <li>• Those who have an exemption to travel because of compassionate reasons</li> <li>• Foreign nationals leaving New Zealand</li> <li>• New Zealanders resident in the Realm returning home, and</li> <li>• People arriving in New Zealand from overseas and returning home after 14 days' isolation/quarantine at port of arrival (except air and marine crew).</li> </ul> <p><b>People must stay within their immediate household bubble</b>, but can extend this to reconnect with close family/whānau, or bring in caregivers, or support isolated people. This extended bubble should remain exclusive. Anyone who feels unwell must immediately self-isolate from others in their extended bubble.</p> <p><b>People at higher-risk of severe illness from COVID-19</b> (e.g. those with underlying medical conditions, especially if not well-controlled, and the elderly) are encouraged to take additional precautions when leaving home. They may work, if they agree with their employer that they can do so safely.</p> <p><i>Any new Health Act order for Alert Level 3 will allow all "essential personal movement" currently possible at Alert Level 4.</i></p>	<p><b>People instructed to stay at home</b>, other than for essential personal movement as defined in Health Act Order of 3 April 2020.</p> <p><b>People must stay within their immediate household bubble.</b> There may be extended bubbles where there are shared care and custody arrangements. Anyone who feels unwell must immediately self-isolate from others in their bubble.</p> <p><b>Sports and recreational activities</b> allowed if within scope of essential personal movement as defined in Health Act Order of 3 April 2020.</p> <p><b>People at higher-risk of severe illness from COVID-19</b> (e.g. those with underlying medical conditions, especially if not well-controlled, and the elderly) are encouraged to take additional precautions when leaving home. They may work, if they agree with their employer that they can do so safely.</p>
<b>Travel and transport</b>	<p>No restrictions on freight. All freight can be distributed and received.</p> <p>All freight can enter and leave the country.</p>			<p>All freight can be distributed and received, with essential freight prioritised. This includes de-vanning, delivery to and receipt by businesses (including those businesses not currently permitted to trade for receipt only) and customers.</p> <p>All freight can enter and leave the country.</p>
	<p>No restrictions on domestic travel.</p> <p>Avoid mass transport if sick, awaiting a result from a COVID-19 test, or required/recommended to self-isolate.</p>	<p><b>You can travel, but do it in a safe way.</b></p> <p>Do not use mass transport if required to self-isolate/quarantine, experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, awaiting a result from a COVID-19 test, suspected/probable/confirmed to have COVID-19, or if subject to an individual notice issued under section 70(1)(f) of the Health Act.</p> <p>Appropriate physical distancing and other risk mitigating measures in place on public transport and aircraft as agreed by relevant agencies.</p>	<p><b>Travel is allowed for the following essential personal movement in your local area:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessing local services and businesses</li> <li>• Going to work and school</li> <li>• Low risk recreation in local area</li> <li>• Extended bubble arrangements, and</li> <li>• Travelling to permitted gatherings.</li> </ul> <p><b>Those travelling on public transport should avoid peak times unless they are going to work or school.</b></p>	<p><b>Personal travel (including the use of private cars or public transport) is only permitted within territorial authority, and for essential personal movement</b> as defined in Health Act order of 3 April 2020.</p>

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<b>Travel and transport (cont)</b>			<p><b>Travel between regions is allowed for the following essential personal movement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workers travelling to do essential work</li> <li>Going to work or school (only in neighbouring region)</li> <li>Shared bubble arrangements</li> <li>Relocating a home or business</li> <li>Those travelling for medical reasons</li> <li>Emergencies and giving effect to court orders</li> <li>Those who have an exemption to travel because of compassionate reasons</li> <li>Foreign nationals leaving New Zealand (except Cook Strait ferries)</li> <li>New Zealanders resident in the Realm returning home, and</li> <li>People arriving in New Zealand from overseas and returning home after 14 days' isolation/quarantine at port of arrival (except air and marine crew).</li> </ul> <p>All other travel is not allowed.</p>	<p><b>Travel between regions, including using domestic air services or Cook Strait ferries, is restricted to the following journeys:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workers travelling to do essential work,</li> <li>Those travelling for medical reasons,</li> <li>Those who have an exemption to travel because of compassionate reasons,</li> <li>Foreign nationals leaving New Zealand (except Cook Strait ferries),</li> <li>New Zealanders resident in the Realm returning home, and</li> <li>New Zealanders returning home after 14 days' isolation/quarantine at port of arrival.</li> </ul> <p>All other travel within region, or to other regions, is not allowed.</p>
<b>Gatherings</b>	No restrictions.	<p><b>Gatherings only allowed for up to 100 people indoors or outdoors.</b></p> <p>Additional conditions on gatherings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical distancing and infection prevention and control requirements must be met.</li> <li>All gatherings must record attendees to ensure contact tracing may be conducted if necessary.</li> <li>Hospitality guidelines regarding alcohol consumption need to be strictly adhered to</li> <li>Should be seated if possible, and aim to last for less than 2 hours.</li> </ul> <p>No participants allowed who have COVID-19 symptoms or who need to be in isolation/quarantine for any reason.</p>	<p><b>Gatherings of up to 10 people at a time for wedding services, funerals and tangihanga.</b></p> <p>Wedding receptions or other celebrations are not allowed. Consumption of food/drink not permitted.</p> <p>Workplaces, education facilities, public transport and supermarkets are not considered gatherings.</p> <p>Additional conditions on gatherings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical distancing and infection prevention and control requirements must be met.</li> <li>All gatherings must record attendees to ensure contact tracing can be conducted if necessary.</li> <li>No participants allowed who have COVID-19 symptoms or who need to be in isolation/quarantine for any reason.</li> </ul>	<b>All gatherings cancelled.</b>
<b>Public venues</b>	No restrictions.	<b>Public venues may open</b> , but must comply with public health measures.	<p><b>All public venues closed</b> (e.g. libraries, museums, cinemas, food courts, gyms, pools, amusement parks, playgrounds, farmers' markets).</p> <p><b>Public open spaces (e.g. parks) may be used</b>, but people need to maintain physical distancing outside their extended bubbles.</p>	<p><b>All public venues closed</b> (e.g. libraries, museums, cinemas, food courts, gyms, pools, amusement parks, playgrounds, farmers' markets).</p> <p><b>Public open spaces (e.g. parks) may be used</b>, but people need to maintain physical distancing outside their bubbles.</p>
<b>Health and disability care services</b>	No restrictions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health and disability care services operate normally as far as possible.</li> <li>Hospitals will operate in line with the National Hospital Response Framework.</li> <li>Physical distance and infection control guidelines followed.</li> <li>Remote consultations used wherever possible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hospitals operate in line with the National Hospital Response Framework.</li> <li>Primary care services are open (including dental and allied health) and use virtual, non-contact consultations where possible.</li> <li>Residential facilities remain open with strict visitor policies. In home visiting required for priority populations.</li> <li>Pharmacies remain open.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hospitals operate in line with the National Hospital Response Framework.</li> <li>Primary care services (including dental and allied health) to use virtual, non-contact consultations where possible.</li> <li>Only urgent acute care conducted in person, maintaining public health guidelines. Routine care postponed.</li> <li>Residential facilities remain open with strict visitor policies. In home visiting required for priority populations.</li> <li>Pharmacies remain open.</li> </ul>

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<b>Workplaces</b>	<p>Businesses must operate safely. This means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complying with Alert Level 1 settings in this table, <b>and</b></li> <li>meeting appropriate public health requirements for their workplace (e.g. handwashing), <b>and</b></li> <li>fulfilling all other health and safety obligations.</li> </ul>	<p>Businesses must operate safely. This means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complying with general Alert Level 2 settings;</li> <li>meeting appropriate public health requirements for their workplace (e.g. having contact tracing systems and physical distancing); and</li> <li>fulfilling all other health and safety obligations.</li> </ul> <p>All businesses are encouraged to use alternative ways of working if possible. Business premises can open for staff and customers. Services can also be provided on customers' premises (e.g. in homes).</p>	<p>People required to work from home unless that is not possible.</p> <p>Workplaces can only open if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>workers cannot work from home, <b>and</b></li> <li>workplaces are operating safely, <b>and</b></li> <li>customers are not allowed on premises, <b>and</b></li> <li>businesses can trade without physical contact with customers (e.g. through phone/online orders, delivery, pick-up and drive-through).</li> </ul> <p>Businesses cannot offer services that involve close personal contact, unless it is an essential service, emergency or critical situation.</p> <p>Supermarkets, dairies and petrol stations can have customers on premises. Retail is possible through delivery and non-contact collection at the door, including of prepared food. No consumption of food/drink is allowed by customers on premises.</p> <p>If businesses cannot operate safely, staff must not go to work and premises should remain closed.</p> <p>“Operating safely” means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complying with Alert Level 3 settings in this table, <b>and</b></li> <li>meeting appropriate public health requirements for their workplace, including for workers (e.g. putting up physical barriers), <b>and</b></li> <li>fulfilling all other health and safety obligations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Essential services operating at Alert Level 4 can operate in the same way at Alert Level 3.</b></p>	<p>People required to work from home unless that is not possible.</p> <p>Workplaces can only open if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>workers cannot work from home, <b>and</b></li> <li>they are operating safely, <b>and</b></li> <li>they are essential services.</li> </ul> <p>“Operating safely” means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>complying with Alert Level 4 settings in this table, <b>and</b></li> <li>meeting appropriate public health requirements for their workplace (e.g. putting up physical barriers), <b>and</b></li> <li>fulfilling all other health and safety obligations.</li> </ul> <p>This means if a business providing an essential service cannot operate safely, workers must not go to work and premises should remain closed.</p> <p>Only supermarkets, dairies and petrol/service stations can open their retail premises to the public. Essential services must also comply with any specific restrictions on how they operate.</p>
<b>Education</b>	<p>Any educational facilities connected to a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 must close temporarily, if advised by the public health unit, to support contact tracing and case and contact management.</p>	<p><b>Tertiary education facilities, schools and early learning centres will open.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early learning centres and schools are all physically open including Years 11–13. Distance learning is available for those unable to attend school (e.g., where there are people self-isolating).</li> <li>Tertiary education facilities are open, and will maintain the core capability to deliver comprehensive distance learning to students.</li> </ul> <p>Any educational facilities connected to a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 must close temporarily, if advised by the public health unit, to support contact tracing and case and contact management.</p>	<p><b>Early learning centres and schools are open for children in Years 1–10, with appropriate health measures in place.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early learning centres will be open to provide childcare for people who are working. Children will not be able to attend playcentres and play groups. Home-based care, education and supervision of young children for more than one family in a home if public health control measures can be implemented. Children are encouraged to stay at home, if caregiving is available.</li> <li>Primary and intermediate schools are open. If there is a parent or caregiver available to look after children at home and school children have access to distance learning, children and young people are encouraged to continue distance learning at home.</li> <li>Secondary schools are open for young people in Years 9 and 10 who may not be able to stay home by themselves. All young people in Years 11–13 learn from home.</li> <li>Tertiary education facilities open for limited activities involving small groups (up to 10 people), and with distance learning provision for others.</li> </ul> <p>Any educational facilities connected to a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 must close temporarily, if advised by the public health unit, to support contact tracing and case and contact management.</p>	<p><b>All educational facilities closed.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All schools engaged in some form of distance learning.</li> <li>Necessary tertiary student and some school hostel (where international students cannot return home and/or it is not safe for domestic students to return home) accommodation can remain open.</li> </ul>