

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 [Covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz)

Updated 24 September 2021

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 (for example, 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.

Restrictions at the different Alert Levels are cumulative (for example, at Alert Level 4, all restrictions at Alert Levels 1, 2 and 3 apply).

Services such as 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.

Outcome

Summary

Public health measures

Physical distancing

Face coverings

	ALERT LEVEL 1	ALERT LEVEL 2	ALERT LEVEL 3	ALERT LEVEL 4
Outcome	Keep the global pandemic out of New Zealand. All New Zealand is prepared for increases in Alert Levels if necessary.	Physical distancing happens in workplaces, and gatherings are restricted to address sporadic cases or a cluster in New Zealand.	Activities, including at workplaces and socially, are further restricted to address a high risk of transmission within New Zealand.	All people movement and contact is strongly restricted, to contain community transmission and outbreaks.
Summary	Be prepared, and be vigilant. Border measures are in place. Public health measures are in place, but no physical distancing is needed.	Workplaces are open, but physical distancing is required. Gatherings are limited.	Stay at home, other than for essential personal movement. Work and study from home if you can. Stay in your extended bubble, which includes your close family or caregivers.	Stay at home, other than for permitted essential personal movement and providing Alert Level 4 services. Stay in your immediate household bubble. If you live alone you may join another household bubble, but it must be exclusive.
Physical distancing	Public health measures are guidance for everyone. Physical distancing is not required.	Keep 2 metres apart from people you do not know in public and places like retail stores, libraries, gyms, and museums. Keep 1 metres apart from people in other places like office buildings and factories, and in places where there is a cap on numbers, like cinemas and hospitality. Gatherings should be limited to 100 people in a defined space.	Keep 2 metres apart outside home or in workplaces that are open for customers where possible (apart from people within your extended bubble). This does not apply to emergency and frontline public services, such as healthcare. In a controlled environment, such as a workplace, keep 1 metre apart.	Keep 2 metres apart at all times outside your home, including at workplaces. This does not apply to emergency and frontline public services, such as healthcare.
Face coverings	You legally must wear a face covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on public transport on flights if you are a driver of a taxi or ride-share vehicle. A face covering can be a mask, or anything that covers your nose and mouth.	You legally will be required to wear a face covering when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on public transport and at departure points, for example airports, train stations and bus stops on flights in taxis or ride share vehicles visiting a healthcare facility visiting an aged care facility inside retail businesses, for example supermarkets, shopping malls, indoor marketplaces and takeaway food stores visiting the public areas within courts and tribunals, local and central Government agencies, and social service providers with customer service counters. You legally will be required to wear a face covering if you work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> as a driver of a taxi or ride-share vehicle at close contact business (for example, barbers, beauticians, or hairdressers) 	We encourage you to wear a face covering where possible especially if it is hard to keep your distance from other people or have contact with someone outside of your bubble (for example when collecting goods from a retail business or food or drink to take away from a hospitality outlet that you have ordered online or by phone). You legally must wear a face covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on public transport and at departure points, for example airports, train stations and bus stops on flights in taxis/ride share vehicles when you visit a healthcare facility unless a patient inside retail businesses, such as supermarkets, pharmacies and petrol stations visiting the public areas of courts and tribunals, local and central Government agencies, and social service providers with customer service counters. in an indoor setting at a secondary school if you are Years 9-13 	We encourage you to wear a face covering when leaving your home, where possible. You legally must wear a face covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on public transport and at departure points, for example airports, train stations and bus stops on flights in taxis/ride share vehicles when you visit a healthcare facility inside retail businesses that are still open, such as supermarkets, pharmacies and petrol stations visiting the public areas of courts and tribunals, local and central Government agencies, and social service providers with customer service counters.

ALERT LEVEL
1

ALERT LEVEL
2

ALERT LEVEL
3

ALERT LEVEL
4

Face coverings continued

- providing services while on site in a home or place of residence (except for providing childcare)
 - in a public facing role at a hospitality venue, for example a cafe, restaurant, bar or nightclub
 - at retail businesses, such as supermarkets, shopping malls, indoor marketplaces, takeaway food stores
 - in the public areas of courts and tribunals, local and central Government agencies, and social service providers with customer service counters
 - at indoor public facilities, for example libraries and museums (but not swimming pools).
- A face covering can be a mask, or anything that covers your nose and mouth.

- You legally must wear a face covering if you work:
- as a driver of a taxi or ride-share vehicle
 - as a delivery driver to residential addresses
 - providing services while on site in a home or place of residence (except for providing childcare)
 - in a public facing role at retail businesses, such as supermarkets, butcheries, and greengrocers.
 - in the public areas of courts and tribunals, local and central Government agencies, and social service providers with customer service counters.
 - in an indoor setting at a secondary school.
- A face covering can be a mask, or anything that covers your nose and mouth.

- You legally must wear a face covering if you work:
- as a driver of a taxi or ride-share vehicle
 - as a delivery driver to residential addresses
 - in a public facing role at retail businesses, such as supermarkets
 - in the public areas of courts and tribunals, local and central Government agencies, and social service providers with customer service counters that are still open.
- A face covering can be a mask, or anything that covers your nose and mouth.

Record keeping and contact tracing

QR codes issued by the NZ Government legally must be displayed in workplaces and on public transport to enable use of the NZ COVID Tracer App for contact tracing. The following places must have systems and processes to ensure visitors keep a record of where you have been (whether via the NZ COVID Tracer app or otherwise):

- Health Services (including pharmacies)
- a close contact business (for example, barbers, beauticians, or hairdressers)
- a hospitality venue, for example a cafe, restaurant, bar or nightclub
- courts and tribunals
- social service providers with customer service counters
- an indoor public facility, such as a library, museum, or swimming pool
- an indoor exercise facility, such as a gym, sports venue, or yoga studio
- an indoor event facility, such as a cinema, theatre, concert venue, or casino
- a social gathering, such as a wedding, funeral, tangihanga or faith-based service.

In all other places, we encourage you to keep track of everywhere you have been, as this helps contact tracing go faster to can prevent any further spread of COVID-19. Contact tracing for all confirmed and probable new cases of COVID-19 continues, with appropriate isolation measures in place.

General public health advice

- Regularly disinfect surfaces.
- Wash and dry hands, cough and sneeze into your elbow, do not touch your face.
- If you have cold, flu or COVID-19 symptoms stay at home and call Healthline or your GP.

Testing

- People who are displaying symptoms of COVID-19, or are close contacts of active cases will be tested. Tests will take place at dedicated Community-Based Assessment Centres or designated medical practices.
- Random testing in communities (including for people who are not showing symptoms) may be carried out locally to help our understanding of the spread of the virus in certain areas.

Isolation and quarantine

- If you display COVID-19 symptoms, test positive for COVID-19, or have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19, you may be required by a Medical Officer of Health to self-isolate. If you cannot self-isolate effectively, you may be required by Medical Officer of Health to enter a quarantine facility.

Border

- Robust border measures are in place to safeguard against the risk of COVID-19 being transmitted into New Zealand. Currently, managed isolation or quarantine is required on arrival for 14 days before onward domestic travel for those entering New Zealand from non-Quarantine Free Travel countries.

Personal movement

There are no restrictions on personal movement. Sports and recreational activities are allowed.

You can leave your home, but do it in a safe way. You can take part in sports and recreational activities so long as they follow the guidance on gatherings, record keeping, hygiene and – where practical – physical distancing. Physical distancing of 2m is required at gyms and swimming pools. If you are at higher-risk of severe illness from COVID-19 (for example, older people and those with underlying medical conditions, especially if not well-controlled) you may work and study if you agree with your employer or education provider that you can do so safely. At risk people who have been fully vaccinated should feel safe to go out and about at Alert Level 2.

You legally must stay at home, other than for essential personal movement. This includes:

- accessing local services and businesses
- going to work or school (only if you have to)
- low-risk recreation in your local area
- extended bubble arrangements
- care of children and others
- emergencies and giving effect to court orders
- travelling to controlled gatherings (weddings, civil union ceremonies, funerals and tangihanga)
- limited Māori customary fishing and food gathering

You legally must stay at home, other than for essential personal movement. This includes:

- accessing or working within Alert Level 4 businesses and services
- accessing health services (including getting a COVID-19 vaccine)
- low-risk recreation in your local area
- shared bubble and caregiver arrangements
- care of children and others
- emergencies and giving effect to court orders
- limited Māori customary fishing and food gathering

Personal movement continued

[Empty box for Alert Level 1 content]

[Empty box for Alert Level 2 content]

- relocating a home or business
- accessing health services (including getting a COVID-19 vaccine)
- leaving New Zealand
- people arriving in New Zealand from overseas and returning home after 14 days' isolation/quarantine at port of arrival (except air and marine crew)
- caring for pets or other animals
- assisting a member of your household

You legally must stay within your immediate household bubble, but can extend this to connect with close family/whānau, or to enable caregiving or support isolated people. This extended bubble should remain exclusive. Anyone who feels unwell should immediately self-isolate from others in their extended bubble.

If you are at higher-risk of severe illness from COVID-19 (for example, older people and those with underlying medical conditions, especially if not well-controlled) you are encouraged to take additional precautions when leaving home. You may work, if you agree with your employer that you can do so safely.

- those who have an exemption to travel because of compassionate reasons
- leaving New Zealand
- people arriving in New Zealand from overseas and returning home after 14 days' isolation/quarantine at port of arrival (except air and marine crew)
- caring for pets or other animals
- assisting a member of your household
- attending a viewing or accompanying tūpāpaku or a deceased person in a funeral home, cemetery or faith-based institution (subject to strict conditions).

You legally must stay within your immediate household bubble. You may have a shared bubble if you live alone or have shared care and custody arrangement. Anyone who feels unwell should immediately self-isolate from others in their bubble.

Travel and transport

Freight

No restrictions on freight. All freight can be distributed and received. All freight can enter and leave the country.

All freight can be distributed and received, with essential freight prioritised. This includes unloading, delivery to, and receipt by, businesses (including those businesses not currently permitted to trade for receipt only) and customers. All freight can enter and leave the country.

Domestic travel

There are no restrictions on domestic travel. Avoid mass transport if you feel sick, are awaiting a result from a COVID-19 test or are required or recommended to self-isolate. Border restrictions remain in place.

You can travel – including between different regions – but do it in a safe way. Do not use mass transport if you are required to self-isolate or quarantine, have symptoms of COVID-19, are awaiting a result from a COVID-19 test, or are a suspected, probable or confirmed COVID-19 case, or if you are subject to an individual notice issued under section 70(1)(f) of the Health Act. Public transport will not allow standing passengers at Alert Level 2.

You can only travel (including in a private car or on public transport) for essential personal movement as set out above. If you need to use public transport, try to avoid peak times unless you are going to work or school.

You can only travel (including in a private car or on public transport) for essential personal movement as set out above.

For more information on permitted travel across an Alert Level boundary and the associated testing requirements, please visit [Covid19.govt.nz/travel/permitted-travel-at-different-alert-levels/](https://www.covid19.govt.nz/travel/permitted-travel-at-different-alert-levels/)

Gatherings

There are no restrictions on gatherings, other than a requirement to record attendees (unless everyone attending knows everyone else). Organisers of gatherings are required to keep records to help with contact tracing if necessary.

All gatherings (such as weddings, civil union ceremonies, birthdays, funerals and tangihanga) can go ahead but are restricted to 100 people in a defined space. All gatherings legally must record attendees to help with contact tracing if necessary (unless everyone attending knows everyone else). You cannot attend any gathering if you have COVID-19 symptoms or need to be in isolation or quarantine for any reason. Workplaces, education facilities, public transport and supermarkets are not considered gatherings.

Only gatherings of up to 10 people at a time can go ahead, and only for weddings and civil union ceremonies (inclusive of staff), funerals and tangihanga (exclusive of staff). A maximum of 5 staff may be in attendance. Wedding receptions or other celebrations are not allowed. Consumption of food and drink is not permitted at gatherings. At all gatherings you legally must record attendees, to help with contact tracing if necessary (unless everyone attending knows everyone else). You should not attend gatherings if you have COVID-19 symptoms or need to be in isolation or quarantine for any reason. Workplaces, education facilities, public transport and supermarkets are not considered gatherings.

No gatherings are allowed. Members of a household or shared bubble may view or accompany tūpāpaku or deceased person in a funeral home, cemetery or faith-based institution subject to strict conditions.

ALERT LEVEL
1

Public/Event facilities

There are no restrictions on public or event facilities other than record keeping requirements (see above).

ALERT LEVEL
2

Event facilities, including cinemas, stadiums, concert venues and casinos can have up to 100 people in a defined space. You can have more than 100 people in an event facility, but only if the people are in separate 'defined spaces', and there should not be direct airflow between the defined spaces

ALERT LEVEL
3

All public facilities are closed (for example, libraries, museums, cinemas, food courts, gyms, pools, amusement parks, farmers' markets).
Public open spaces (for example, parks) may be used, but people need to keep 2 metres apart from people outside their extended bubbles.

ALERT LEVEL
4

All public facilities are closed (for example, libraries, museums, cinemas, food courts, gyms, pools, amusement parks and farmers' markets).
Public open spaces (for example, parks) may be used, but people need to keep 2 metres apart from people outside their bubbles.

Health and disability care services

There are no restrictions on health and disability care services, other than record keeping requirements (see above).

Health and disability care services operate normally as far as possible.
Hospitals will operate in line with the National Hospital Response Framework.
Primary and community health providers will operate in line with the Community Response Framework.
Physical distance and infection control guidelines should be followed.
Remote consultations should be used wherever possible.

Hospitals operate in line with the National Hospital Response Framework.
Primary and community health providers will operate in line with the Community Response Framework.
Residential facilities remain open with strict visitor policies. In-home visiting required for priority populations.
Pharmacies remain open.

Hospitals operate in line with the National Hospital Response Framework.
Primary and community health providers will operate in line with the Community Response Framework.
Only urgent acute care is conducted in person, maintaining public health guidelines. Routine care is postponed.
Residential facilities remain open with strict visitor policies. In-home visiting required for priority populations.
Pharmacies remain open.

Workplaces

Businesses legally must operate safely and fulfil all their usual health and safety obligations.
Business legally must display NZ COVID Tracer QR codes, and many (see above) are required to ensure records are kept (whether via the NZ COVID Tracer app or otherwise).

Businesses and workplaces legally must operate safely. This means:

- complying with general Alert Level 2 settings
- meeting appropriate public health requirements for their workplace (for example having contact tracing systems, face coverings, and physical distancing), and
- fulfilling all other health and safety obligations.

All businesses are encouraged to use alternative ways of working if possible. Business premises can open for staff and customers provided they meet public health requirements. Services can also be provided on customers' premises (for example, in homes).
Close contact services can operate if they meet public health measures, including mandatory record keeping, wearing of face coverings, good hygiene practices and minimised contact to the greatest extent possible.

You should work from home if you can.
Workplaces should only open if:

- workers cannot work from home, and
- your workplace can operate safely, and
- no customers enter your premises unless permitted (see below), and
- you do not have physical contact with customers. Your contact with customers can be through phone or online orders, delivery, pick-up and drive-through.

You cannot have customers on your premises unless your business is a supermarket, dairy, primary produce retailer (greengrocer, fishmonger or butcher), pharmacy, petrol station, hardware store providing goods to trade customers.
Retail is possible through delivery and non-contact collection of goods and prepared food at the door (including hardware and DIY stores and the doors of businesses located inside malls). Customers cannot eat or drink on your premises.
If you cannot operate safely, workplaces should remain closed
Operating safely means:

- complying with Alert Level 3 settings in this table, and
- meeting appropriate public health requirements for their workplace, including for workers (for example, putting up physical barriers), and
- fulfilling all other health and safety obligations.

You are required to work from home unless you are providing an Alert Level 4 service. Alert Level 4 services should minimise the number of staff who come to the workplace.
Alert Level 4 services legally must:

- comply with Alert Level 4 settings in this table, and
- meet appropriate public health requirements for their workplace (for example, putting up physical barriers), and
- fulfil all other health and safety obligations.

This means if your business provides an Alert Level 4 service but you cannot operate safely, then your workplace should remain closed.
Only supermarkets, pharmacies, dairies and petrol/service stations can open to the public.
Green grocers, butchers, bakeries, and fishmongers cannot open to customers. However, uncooked food products and bakery products, as well as essential non-food items, can be sold online or via phone order. All orders legally must be contactless, including payment and delivery.
Alert Level 4 services legally must also comply with any specific restrictions on how they operate.

ALERT LEVEL

1

ALERT LEVEL

2

ALERT LEVEL

3

ALERT LEVEL

4

Education

All early learning services, schools, kura and tertiary education facilities are open.

Any educational facilities connected to a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 legally must close temporarily, if advised by a medical officer of health, to support contact tracing and case and contact management.

Early learning centres and schools are all physically open, including Years 11–13.

Distance learning is available for those unable to attend school (for example, when people are self-isolating).

Tertiary education facilities are open, and will maintain the core capability to deliver comprehensive distance learning to students.

Any educational facilities connected to a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 legally must close temporarily, if advised by a medical officer of health, to support contact tracing and case and contact management.

Students over 12, and teachers, are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings at Alert Level 2.

Early learning centres and schools are open for children in Years 1–10, with appropriate health measures in place including physical distancing and maintaining classroom bubbles of appropriate sizes.

Early learning centres are open to provide childcare for people who are working. Children cannot attend playcentres and play groups. Home-based care, education and supervision of young children for more than one family can go ahead in a home if public health control measures can be implemented. Children are encouraged to stay at home, if caregiving is available.

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.

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.

Tertiary education facilities open for limited activities involving small groups (up to 10 people), and with distance learning provision for others.

Any educational facilities connected to a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 need to close temporarily, if directed by a medical officer of health, to support contact tracing and case and contact management.

Face coverings are required in indoor settings at a secondary school, for example in a classroom or assemblies. This includes students in Years 9–13 and staff.

All educational facilities are closed. All schools are engaged in some form of distance learning.

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.