

Moving from doing not much at all to doing what can be done safely: what Alert Level 3 will look like



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Details of Alert Level 3 were released by the Government on 16 April 2020. While a specific date for this transition has not been provided, the information provides all of New Zealand a chance to prepare for the future. Alert Level 3 expects you to stay at home, other than for essential personal movement, and going to work/school, and stay in your extended bubble, which can now include close family or caregivers.

Criteria to shift to Alert Level 3

The Government has indicated that a shift to Alert Level 3 will only occur when the following four criteria have been met:

- We know that community transmission is under control, and the transmission rate is very low.
- We have robust measures at the border stopping new infection.
- We have tracing and testing capacity to shut down any new outbreak.
- We have supplies for, and capacity, in the health system.

Until these criteria are met and an announcement is made about a shift down in the Alert Level system, New Zealand remains in Alert Level 4.

Outline of Alert Level 3 directives

Under Alert Level 3 there will continue to be significant restrictions on daily lives and business interactions as the risk of COVID-19 will have diminished, but remains present.

The overriding principle for Alert Level 3m the government has said, is to stay at home, other than for essential personal movement and going to work and school.

Personal movement

People remain instructed to stay at home, other than for essential personal movement. "Essential personal movement" includes accessing local services and businesses allowed to operate during Alert Level 3, going to work or school if allowed, emergencies and to give effect to court orders, travelling to permitted gatherings, relocating a home or business, medical reasons, those with exemptions to travel due to compassionate reasons, or foreign nationals leaving New Zealand.

People must continue to stay within their immediate household bubble. This may now be expanded to reconnect with close whanau, bring in caregivers, or support isolated people. However, it remains important to continue to keep your bubble exclusive and only include people where it will keep everyone safe and healthy. If anyone feels unwell, they must self-isolate from everyone else in the bubble.

If you were not at your usual place of residence when the Alert Level 4 restrictions came into place,

you can now move throughout New Zealand to do so. However, you may only move once and only in one direction. This includes moving to or from the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau, as these are part of the Realm of New Zealand.

If the situation in your bubble is unsafe or life-threatening you can leave your bubble immediately, and seek help from a neighbour or friend. Once there you can reach out to the Police, or Women's Refuge.

Recreation

The most important principles continue to be to stay close to home, stay two metres away from people not in your bubble, and avoid activity that could get you hurt and require medical care or rescuing, as this would put essential workers at risk. Activities that are local and can be done safely are permitted, so long as they do not involve interacting with other people, or equipment touched by other people. Driving to a nearby area is permitted if it is still within a close distance to your home, such as to go for a swim or surf at the local beach, a day walk or fish from a wharf. Staying overnight at a bach or holiday home is not permitted.

Public venues

All public venues remain closed. This includes museums, cinemas, food courts, gyms, pools, amusement parks, playgrounds, farmers' markets.

Open public spaces, such as the park or beach, may be used, but people must maintain physical distancing outside their bubble.

Health and disability care services

Hospitals continue to operate in line with the National Hospital Response Framework. Primary care services may open (including dental and allied health) and use virtual, non-contact consultations where possible. Residential facilities remain open with strict visitor policies. Pharmacies remain open.

Education

Early Learning / Education Centres and schools with appropriate public health measures in place may open for children up to and including year 10 to attend if their parents are working away from home. There will not be any check or test applied asking why children are attending school. However, those children that are able to continue to learn from home should do so. All young people in years 11-13

must continue to learn at home, as they are of legal age to remain home alone. Physical attendance at school is voluntary, but all children not attending school should continue to learn by distance. Schools and Early Learning / Education Centres will contact parents as they work through their plans for re-opening. It will take at least a week for Schools and Early Learning Services to get ready to open after we go to Alert Level 3.

Tertiary education facilities may open for limited activities involving small stable groups (up to 10 people who do not change). Campus research that cannot be done off campus such as lab work, and practical hands on learning, such as trades courses, where the learning can happen in small groups with appropriate physical distancing. Courses where close contact is unavoidable will remain online only.

Any educational facilities connected to a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 must close on an individual or group basis for 72 hours to allow contact tracing, and then potentially for a further 14 days.

Workers and businesses

Most, but not all, businesses can start to open under Alert Level 3. They must take health measures to keep their workers safe, including:

- Workers must work from home if they can;
- Workplaces that may operate must do so safely – keeping one metre between workers, recording who is working together, limiting interaction between groups of workers, disinfecting surfaces, and maintaining high hygiene standards; and
- Most workers will not require PPE to stay safe at work. Incorrectly used PPE can create more risk. Good hygiene measures like hand washing with soap and water, physical distancing, sneeze and cough etiquette, and wiping down surfaces is the best defence against COVID-19.

Retail and hospitality businesses can only open for delivery and contactless pre-ordered pick up – customers cannot enter stores. The key is that no face-to-face interactions are permitted. Only supermarkets, dairies and petrol stations may allow customers into their stores, with the same restrictions and measures in place as Alert Level 4. Businesses cannot offer services which involve face-to-face contact or sustained close contact (e.g. hairdressing, massage, house cleaning, or door-to-

door salespeople). Other in-home services can be delivered if it is safe to do so (like tradespeople for repairs or installations), but must maintain two metre separation from those in the house.

There has been an indication that the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment will be implementing an accreditation scheme for businesses allowed to operate in Alert Level 3. This is likely to be based on work sectors rather than for individual businesses due to expected increase in applicable businesses compared to Alert Level 4.

Examples provided by the Government of businesses able to operate in Alert Level 3 include:

- Takeaway businesses may reopen if they have pre-ordered contactless pick up, or can do home delivery.
- Real estate agents can open, but people should work from home if they can. The agent can enter people's homes, but not have customers in the office. They cannot run an open home.
- Construction businesses can start work again but strict hygiene measures must be put in place – and office staff who can work from home should do so.
- The risk of transmission from people providing services that require close personal contact (e.g. hairdressers, manicurists, beauticians, domestic cleaners, personal trainers, gymnasiums) remains too great. These businesses can resume under Alert Level 2, with appropriate health measures in place.

Travel and transport

Travel is still restricted, and is only allowed for permitted movement in your local area. Public transport continues to be available for travel to work or school, but there will be limited capacity, and physical distancing of 2 metres remains in place.

Regional travel is allowed for permitted movement in limited circumstances. Crossing regional boundaries is allowed if it occurs in the usual course of travel to work or school. You cannot travel to another region for recreation. You should not take a flight to another region unless you are an essential worker travelling to do essential work.

There is no longer a restriction on freight. All freight can now be distributed and received, and may enter and leave the country.

Gatherings

Acceptable gatherings are very limited. Up to 10 people can gather for:

- Funerals and tangihanga; or
- Wedding ceremonies, but not receptions.

Those attending these gatherings should keep a list of attendees, remain at least 2 metres apart and wash hands regularly. Consumption of food or drink is not permitted.

At-risk people

People at higher-risk of severe illness from COVID-19 (older people, or those with underlying medical conditions) are encouraged to stay home where possible, and take additional precautions when leaving home, like avoiding supermarkets, or touching any surfaces.

People at higher risk of severe illness should take extra precautions. They should discuss with their employer whether they can work from home, or other ways to keep them safe while at work and travelling to work. If they decide to stay at home, and cannot work from home they should agree with their employer what their leave and pay arrangements will be.

Key contacts



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