

Alert Level 3 Frequently Asked Questions

This document answers frequently asked questions about life at COVID-19 Alert Level 3. Information can be used for any government, agency, or local government communications.

This is a living document that is updated once a day. Please ensure you are using the most up to date version.

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Find out more at
Covid19.govt.nz

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Businesses

Can I open my business premise at Alert Level 3?

Business can open their premises or sites if they can do so safely. People need to work from home unless that is not possible.

- Workplaces must be operating safely (complying with Alert Level 3 settings; meeting appropriate public health requirements; fulfilling all other health and safety obligations)
- Customers are not allowed on premises
- Businesses can trade if they do so without physical contact with customers (e.g. through phone/online orders, delivery, contactless pick-up and drive through)
- Businesses cannot offer services that involve close personal contact, apart from some essential services, or in an emergency or critical situation.

Can I open my retail store, bar or restaurant?

Yes, but customers cannot enter your premises.

You can do delivery, or drive-through or contactless pick up by customers. Customers can't consume food or drink on your premises.

Businesses whose premises were open to customers under Alert Level 4 like supermarkets, dairies, pharmacies, and petrol stations can remain open.

What can I deliver?

All goods can be delivered, including food. The delivery must be contactless. Alcohol can be delivered if you have an off-licence.

Should I provide masks, gloves and other PPE to my workers?

If workers did not require PPE before COVID-19, then they do not require it now. The best defence against COVID-19 is handwashing with soap and water, keeping physical distance, cleaning surfaces and covering coughs and sneezes.

Can customers pay in cash?

Yes, if there is no alternative. You should try to handle the cash using self-checkout kiosks or clean your hands well after handling.

Can I meet with customers face-to-face?

No. Customer interactions should be done remotely – by phone or online. You can provide certain services in home, provided physical distancing and other public health guidance is observed, however, house cleaning is not allowed.

What financial support is available?

Employers affected by Covid-19, including sole traders and the self-employed, may be eligible for a [Wage Subsidy](#) which should be paid as part of employees' normal

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Covid19.govt.nz

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wages. There is [Essential Workers Leave Support](#) for essential businesses to pay employees who can't come into work because they are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 according to the Ministry of Health.

Where can I go for more information about businesses?

For information on workplace preparedness, the Wage Subsidy Scheme, changes to an employee's work arrangements, and essential workers and businesses visit <https://www.employment.govt.nz/leave-and-holidays/other-types-of-leave/coronavirus-workplace/>

For information for importers and exporters, tax obligations, travel and other useful information visit <https://www.business.govt.nz/covid-19>

For information for the construction sector visit <https://www.building.govt.nz/covid-19/>

For information on working safely, go to www.worksafe.govt.nz or ring 0800 030 040, or talk to your local chamber of commerce, BusinessNZ, or your industry association.

Returning to work

Can I get into my business premise to prepare for Alert Level 3?

Yes, you can get into your business now to do limited activities

Businesses can only:

- Clear, unpack and sort freight at their workplaces,
- Clean their premises, and
- Rearrange workplaces for when workers return to premises at Alert Level 3 (e.g. to allow physical distancing).

Activities such as regular maintenance and setting up delivery/click and collect systems should wait until we are at Alert Level 3.

These activities should only be undertaken if they can be done safely and in line with public health guidance. This includes appropriate hygiene measures and two metre physical distancing, as required at Alert Level 4. All other normal rules still apply. If stock needs to be moved with a forklift, for example, the driver needs the appropriate licence.

Businesses should carefully consider what activities are absolutely necessary and how to safely operate based on their individual circumstances.

Can I get my workers to come into work to prepare our business for Alert Level 3?

You can ask a very limited number of your workers to come to work to prepare for Alert Level 3 if you are meeting health and safety and public health requirements.

Find out more at
Covid19.govt.nz

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This includes appropriate hygiene measures and two-metre physical distancing, as required at Alert Level 4.

You should only ask the minimum number of workers to come to work, and it should only be for activities that are necessary to prepare the workplace for opening at Alert Level 3.

Anzac Day falls on the weekend, and normal Holidays Act rules apply.

Can my employer make me come into work to prepare the business premises for Alert Level 3?

Your employer can ask you to come to work to prepare for Alert Level 3 if they are meeting health and safety and public health requirements. This includes appropriate hygiene measures and two-metre physical distancing, as required at Alert Level 4.

Your employer should only ask the minimum number of workers to come to work, and it should only be for activities that are necessary to prepare the workplace for opening at Alert Level 3.

If you do not believe the activity is necessary or you do not believe your employer is meeting the health and safety and public health requirements, you should raise your concerns with them. Employers need to engage their workers' views on how best to manage risks for workers.

If your concerns are not addressed, you may wish to escalate them to your health and safety representative, union or WorkSafe.

What if the activity requires closer contact than two metres (for example lifting heavy items)?

Some activities, such as lifting heavy items, may require two people to achieve safely. Employers should not do activities alone where it would be unsafe to do so. You may need to consider whether equipment can be used instead. You may also need to defer some tasks to when you have sufficient controls in place to manage all health and safety risks so far as reasonably practicable.

What if I need to travel to get back to my business or workplace to prepare for Alert Level 3?

If your business is in the same region where you are currently domiciled, you can travel to it.

Why is 1 metre allowed in the workplace but 2 metres everywhere else?

In an uncontrolled environment, such as a public place, a distance of 2 metres remains appropriate.

Find out more at
Covid19.govt.nz

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However, a workplace is a controlled environment and this means that 'Persons Conducting a Business or Undertaking' or PCBUs, are able to manage risks in other ways.

For example, they could put in controls such as screens, or if appropriate, use personal protective equipment such as masks and gloves. With these types of measures, it is possible to manage the risk to allow smaller safe distances such as 1 metre (or even smaller such as nurses caring for patients).

Where effective controls can't be implemented 2 metres may remain the safe distance for workplaces.

In all cases, the obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 to ensure the health and safety of workers and other people in the workplace so far as is reasonably practicable will apply.

PCBUs need to take steps to mitigate risks, including thinking about measures such as disinfecting surfaces and other practices to ensure workers don't come to work sick.

WorkSafe has guidance on how PCBUs and workers can work together to manage risk during the pandemic.

My employer wants me to return to the workplace but I'm worried about staying safe. What are my options?

Your employer is obliged to keep you safe and well. Regular employment law applies. You and your employer should discuss in good faith what options there are.

You may be able to agree flexible working arrangements. If you can work from home, you should be paid as normal for your work. You can agree to take annual leave in advance, but can't be compelled to. Options include special paid leave, leave without pay, or a mix of these. You are strongly encouraged to take advice to ensure you choose the best option.

For employment advice and support, go to www.employment.govt.nz or ring 0800 20 90 20.

Do I have to agree to a cut in pay or hours cut?

Any reduction in hours or pay must be mutually agreed and negotiated in good faith. You should have had an appropriate amount of time to consider any proposal.

What if I've have been in contact with someone who has Covid-19?

You should not go to work. You need to self-isolate for two weeks.

Find out more at
Covid19.govt.nz

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What if I'm unwell?

You should not go to work until you're well. You should discuss with your employer about your sick leave policy if you have any concerns about leave.

If you have COVID-19 symptoms you can contact Healthline for free on 0800 358 5453, or you can call your doctor immediately.

I'm over working at home; it's inconvenient. Can I go to the office?

No, you need to work from home unless that is not possible.

Will paid childcare for essential workers continue?

Under Level 3, ECE centres will be re-opened for those who need to return to work. In addition, you are able to extend your bubble to bring in a caregiver, if needed.

Compliance and regions

How are you going to make sure people and businesses comply?

The government, police and regulators such as WorkSafe will work with businesses and communities to make sure Level 3 requirements and guidance are followed. We need all New Zealanders to work together to make Alert Level 3 a success.

Will some regions be at different Alert Levels?

It is possible that different regions will be at different Alert Levels, but that is not being considered at this stage. Everyone will be fully informed if this is going to happen.

Education

How will kids be kept safe?

Each education provider will put measures in place to keep children safe and well. This will include having small groups of students, public health measures, regular cleaning, and possibly staggered start and finish times.

Can I send my kids to school, early learning or kohanga reo?

Children should stay at home if there is someone to care for them and they can learn from home. Years 11-13 must stay home.

Education centres will be in touch with parents soon to discuss their situations.

Can home based learning services start again?

Home based early learning services can resume, with up to 4 children, including the educator's own children in the home, provided public health requirements are met.

Find out more at
Covid19.govt.nz

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Will tertiary education start face-to-face learning?

Tertiary education will still be delivered online. Certain small groups can work together at tertiary institutions – please visit the [covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz) website for more details.

Will student accommodation be open?

Student accommodation will remain open for students who require it.

Recreation

Can I drive to do a recreation activity?

You can drive within your region (or local area if you live near a regional boundary), to do a recreation activity. Stick to the option closest to home, and stay safe.

Can I go to the beach or park?

You can visit a beach or park in your region, or local area if near a regional boundary – try to visit the closest one to home. Make sure you stay 2 metres away from others. If the beach or park is busy, go home and try again later.

You can do low-risk recreation activities like swimming at a safe beach.

Avoid using any common equipment touched by people from outside your bubble.

Can I go mountain biking?

Mountain biking is okay if you are experienced and know the trail. Stick to easy trails. Make sure you maintain a 2-metre distance from other people.

Can I go tramping?

You can go on day walks on easy trails in your region – but check if they are open before you go, many DOC trails are closed. Stay as close to home as you can, and make sure you maintain a 2-metre distance from other people.

Can I go hunting?

Guidance is being developed about hunting under Alert Level 3, and will be made available prior to the country moving into Level 3. Please wait until this guidance is provided.

Can I go surfing?

Surfing is okay if you're an experienced surfer and you stay in your region. Now is not the time to take up surfing as a new sport. Don't take risks that might mean rescue services have to break their bubble to help you.

Can I go swimming?

You can go swimming in safe local spots. Don't take risks that might mean rescue services have to break their bubble to help you.

Find out more at
[Covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz)

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Can I go fishing?

You can go fishing from the beach or a wharf. You should not fish from rocks or a boat because these can result in needing assistance or rescuing. Don't take risks that might mean rescue services have to break their bubble to help you.

Can I go out on the water?

Boating, jet-skiing and scuba diving are not allowed at Level 3. We cannot risk rescue services breaking their bubble to save you if you get into trouble.

Can I go horse-riding?

Yes – if you are an experienced rider and it is low risk. Stay as close to home as you can, and stay safe.

Can I play team sports or do team training?

Stay in your bubble. Team sports or training outside of your bubble are not allowed. Avoid using any common equipment touched by people from outside your bubble.

Can I go to the gym?

Gyms are closed under Level 3.

Travel and transport

Can I use public transport?

Yes, you can use public transport if you are travelling for 'essential personal reasons' as listed on the [covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz) website, which includes going to work or school if you need to. Please avoid using it if you don't need to, as there is limited capacity.

Can I travel to another region?

Travel to other regions is only allowed for essential reasons. You can find these reasons on the [covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz) website.

Is travel in and out of New Zealand allowed?

NZ citizens and residents can enter the country, with a few exceptions for other people. Anyone arriving must spend 2 weeks in managed isolation at their place of arrival.

New Zealanders are advised not to go overseas.

Find out more at
[Covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz)

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Keeping your distance

Can I meet with friends or sit with neighbours on my driveway if we stay 2 metres apart?

Contact with people outside of your bubble needs to be limited to reduce the risk of transmission. You can have a quick chat with your neighbours if you are 2 metres apart.

What if I'm somewhere that's really crowded?

You should avoid places where it's difficult to keep your 2 metres distance. If a public space becomes too crowded to maintain 2 metres you should consider leaving. People should not be congregating at Level 3, and no gatherings are allowed, except under very limited circumstances.

Accommodation

Can my landlord evict me or raise the rent?

Landlords cannot currently raise rents. They can only evict tenants or cancel tenancies in very specific circumstances. Visit or call Tenancy Services for more advice.

Can I look for houses to buy?

Yes, but it should be done without face-to-face contact with real estate agents, owners or existing tenants.

Can I move house?

Yes, but only if it is a long-term move that needs to happen now. You can move between regions if required, and moving companies are allowed to operate, with public health measures in place.

How do I get help with housing?

If you need support to find suitable accommodation to self-isolate you can contact the Temporary Accommodation Service (TAS) on 0508 754 163.

If you've lost your job, or had your hours reduced you may be able to get a benefit or some other financial help from Work and Income to help with accommodation costs.

Find out more at
Covid19.govt.nz

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Staying in your bubble

Can I extend my bubble?

You can slightly extend your household bubble, but keep it local, small and exclusive. For example, you could add close family/whānau members, a caregiver, or someone who needs care, or a couple or single person if they live alone.

Anyone who feels unwell should immediately self-isolate from others in their extended bubble.

What is a shared bubble arrangement?

A shared bubble includes children in shared custody arrangements, who can move between households if in the same community. A shared bubble can work the same way in Level 3 or 4.

Can I leave a bubble if I'm unsafe?

Yes. If the situation in your bubble is unsafe you can leave your bubble immediately, and seek help. If possible, ask a trusted neighbour or friend for help, then call Police or Women's Refuge.

Can I visit friends or family, or have visitors?

No. You should avoid contact with anyone outside your bubble, except if you need to go work or school, or while accessing essential services. Don't invite or allow social visitors, such as friends, family and whānau, to enter your home.

Groups needing to take extra precautions

What groups of people need to take extra precautions?

People with underlying medical conditions, especially if not well-controlled, and some older people are at higher-risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

If I am at higher risk, should I still stay at home?

You do not have to stay at home, but do take extra precautions when you go out. Like everybody, you can only go out for essential purposes – like getting food, going to the pharmacy, to exercise or to work (if you cannot work from home).

However, you may prefer to get essential supplies through family, friends or neighbours or get them delivered.

Wash your hands often, keep 2 metres distance from others, protect your bubble, and get your flu jab.

Can I go to work?

At Level 3 everyone must work from home if they can.

Find out more at
Covid19.govt.nz

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If you cannot work from home, you can go to work if you agree with your employer that you can do so safely.

Can my in-home carer visit?

Yes. Essential in-home care for those with disabilities or health conditions is permitted. Services will be modified to reduce the risks of COVID-19.

Gatherings

Can we have a wedding, funeral or tangihanga?

The only gatherings allowed at Alert Level 3 are wedding services (not receptions), funerals and tangihanga, up to a maximum of 10 people.

Can I go to any other religious event or ceremony?

Gatherings other than weddings, funerals or tangihanga are not allowed. Many places of worship are catering for communities using a variety of online methods.

Can I take care of my environmental/kaitiaki responsibilities for our awa, our maunga and our ngahere?

Yes, as long as it does not take you well outside the regional boundary, or into difficult or remote terrain where you could get into trouble and need rescuing. If this is NGO or paid work activity, then physical distancing, hand washing and other public health measures must be maintained. If this is personal activity, then you can only do this with people in your household bubble.

Key contacts

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

[Facebook](#) - [LinkedIn](#) - [Instagram](#) - [Twitter](#) - [WhatsApp](#)

[Subscribe to the daily COVID-19 update email.](#)

Healthline

If you have specific queries about your health, including registering self-isolation, call 0800 358 5453. To talk with a qualified counsellor for free 24/7, call 1737. Access to interpreters is also available. For international SIMS, call +64 9 358 5433

Financial support

Work and Income 0800 559 009, or, for seniors 65+ 0800 552 002, and students 0800 88 99 00. www.workandincome.govt.nz or, for food grant & benefit application, <https://my.msd.govt.nz/>

Employment advice and support for employees

www.employment.govt.nz or ring 0800 20 90 20

For information on working safely

Find out more at
Covid19.govt.nz

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www.worksafe.govt.nz 0800 030 040 (Worksafe)

Housing and Tenancy

Support for renters struggling to pay rent, eligibility for support and the freeze on residential rent increases is available on the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development's website: www.hud.govt.nz.

For general inquiries ring 0800 646 483 or email info@HUD.govt.nz.

For information about temporary accommodation services <https://temporaryaccommodation.mbie.govt.nz/covid-19/w> To register for temporary accommodation services contact MBIE on 0508 754 163.

Help accessing supplies

If you can't access food or essential items yourself or with the help of others, contact your local Civil Defence Emergency Management Group (CDEM). The number for your local CDEM Group is on the National Emergency Management Agency website: www.civildefence.govt.nz/find-your-civil-defence-group/.

The Student Volunteer Army is delivering groceries for over 65s, at risk people, and health workers. You can order and pay online at www.shop.sva.org.nz

Education

Advice on distance learning for students, parents and whānau can be found on the Ministry of Education website: www.education.govt.nz/covid-19/distance-learning/

Learning resources and information for parents, early learning and school students for learning at home can be viewed on line at www.learningfromhome.govt.nz/supporting-learning.

Reporting breaches

Report it to Police online at www.police.govt.nz/105support. Do not ring 105. Reports will be prioritised based on risk.

Immigration

Visit www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/covid-19 or call the Immigration Contact Centre (6am – 10pm, Monday – Friday (NZST) from landlines only on 0508 558 855, or Auckland 09 914 4100, Wellington 04 910 9915, or from overseas +64 9 914 4100

Essential services

For advice and support for essential businesses call 0800 22 66 57 (8am – 8pm, Monday–Friday and 8am – 5pm, Saturday–Sunday) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Transport

For information on transport go to www.transport.govt.nz/about/covid-19 or email essentialtravel@transport.govt.nz

Price Watch

Find out more at
Covid19.govt.nz

Alert Level 3 Frequently Asked Questions

Email MBIE if you have concerns about price increases on essential goods and services.
pricewatch@mbie.govt.nz.

Kiwis returning home

All New Zealanders overseas are encouraged to see the advice and register on
www.safetravel.govt.nz.

All of Government contact line

If you're not sure what assistance may be available, or don't know who to contact for help, call the free Government helpline on 0800 779 997 (8am–10pm, 7 days a week).

Find out more at
Covid19.govt.nz

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