

COVID-19 FAQs

6 September 2021

Unite
against
COVID-19

ALERT LEVEL 2

This contains the most up-to-date and approved messaging on key COVID-19 matters.

Information that changes or is added between grids will be highlighted. Please ensure you are using the most up to date version.

This document answers frequently asked questions about what **Alert Level 2** means for areas of New Zealand.

This information applies from **6 September 2021 – 8.00pm.**

Information can be used for any government, agency, local government or relevant sector and business communications.

This is a living document that will be updated frequently. Information that changes or is added between versions will be highlighted. New sections and changes to messages are in **orange.**

Please ensure you are using the most up to date version.

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Alert Level status

Q. What is happening?

All of New Zealand, except Auckland, will move to Alert Level 2 at 11.59pm on Tuesday 7 September.

Auckland will stay at Alert Level 4 till until 11.59pm on Tuesday September 14.

Cabinet will review the levels for the whole country, including Auckland, on Monday 13 September.

Alert Level 2 is different with Delta. There are several new requirements:

- Everyone aged 12 and over must legally keep a record of where they have been when visiting certain places such as restaurants, cinemas, concerts, churches, and close-contact businesses like hairdressers.
- A limit of 50 people applies for indoor gatherings, hospitality settings and event venues, 100 people for outdoor settings.
- Keep 2 metres apart from people you do not know in public, and places like retail stores, libraries, gyms and museums
- Face coverings are mandatory for everyone aged 12 and over in indoor public facilities like libraries, museums and shopping malls.
- Face coverings are mandatory for customer-facing staff at hospitality venues and public facilities.

Alert Level 2 – there's still work to do. Everyone has a part to play in stopping the spread.

Q. What are the differences between Alert Level 3 and Alert Level 2?

Alert Level 2 allows a little more freedom, but restrictions remain to ensure the community and New Zealand remains safe.

The virus changed with Delta, and so that means we need to adjust too.

Face coverings and scanning in will be mandatory in more places, as more businesses and services can operate at Alert Level 2. It is encouraged that whenever you leave

the house, you wear a face covering, other than when exercising, eating or drinking or at a workplace that is not public facing.

There are limitations on the number of people for all gatherings and hospitality settings – with a limit of 50 people in indoor venues, up to 100 people at outdoor venues.

Q: Can I expand my bubble at Alert Level 2?

You no longer need to keep to your bubble at Alert Level 2, and can socialise and attend gatherings of groups of up to 50 people indoors, and 100 people outdoors.

Remember: more people equals more risk, so keep track of where you've been, and who you've seen in-person.

Q: Do the limits of 50 / 100 include staff as well?

Limits of 50 people at indoor hospitality venues, gatherings or event facilities does not include staff. Public-facing staff must wear face coverings.

Face coverings

Q: Where do I have to wear a face covering?

You legally must wear a face covering if you are aged 12 and over when:

- using public transport, airplanes (including in departure points such as train/bus stations) and in a taxi or ride-share vehicle
- visiting a healthcare or aged care facility (other than for a patient)
- inside retail businesses, such as supermarkets, pharmacies, 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 must wear a face covering if you work:

- as a driver of a taxi or ride-share vehicle
- at close contact businesses, for example beauticians and hairdressers
- 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)

Q: If I am visiting my GP, do I need to wear a face covering?

No, but this is encouraged. Visitors to a hospital or aged care facilities do need to wear a face covering.

Q: Do I have to wear a face covering at a movie or concert?

Face coverings are required in public spaces – such as collecting your ticket or purchasing food. Face coverings are encouraged, but not required when you are seated, such as when consuming food or drink.

Travel and personal movement

Q. Can I travel at Alert Level 2?

Travel is less restricted at Alert Level 2, you can travel domestically within Alert Level 2 regions, as long as you follow public health guidelines.

Travel around the country is still limited. Inter-regional travel between areas at Alert Level 2 is allowed but travel across Alert Level boundaries is restricted. Police checkpoints and checking evidence for travel will be in place at Alert Level boundaries.

If leaving home, it's recommended to wear a face covering where appropriate.

However, at any Alert Level you should not leave home if you:

- have symptoms of COVID-19
- test positive for COVID-19.
- have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19
- are a household contact of someone who was in a location of interest, until that person gets a negative test result at day 5. If you have not had any contact with the person who was at the location of interest, you can stop isolating as soon as they have a negative result.

The full range of reasons to travel at Alert Level 2 can found on the [Unite Against COVID-19 website](#).

Business Travel Documents.

- If your business has current Business Travel Documents you can update these by logging into your existing request and adding the new boundary and worker details on the [Business.govt.nz](https://business.govt.nz) website
- If you don't have current Business Travel Documents you can apply for these on the [Business.govt.nz](https://business.govt.nz) website

Once these requests have been processed, your documents will be available for businesses to distribute to workers.

More detail on Business Travel Documents can be found here: [Business travel across Alert Level Boundaries — business.govt.nz](https://business.govt.nz/alert-level-boundaries)

Q. Who has to have a test for permitted travel over the Auckland boundary?

All Alert Level 4 workers who are permitted to cross the Auckland boundary will be required to have evidence of a test taken within the seven days before crossing.

This will be a requirement from 11.59pm on Thursday – allowing time for workers to get a test now.

The proof of test will be in addition to the Business Travel Document all workers are currently carrying when they travel in and out of Auckland.

Agencies will continue working closely and with relevant employers to confirm the process over the next few days before this requirement comes into effect.

People will not be required to stand down or stay at home while awaiting their result, as this additional testing is to provide assurance travel in and out of boundaries is being done safely.

There is no cost for workers who get a test. **See Healthpoint** for testing locations.

Individuals who are travelling for permitted personal reasons should also be tested – noting this travel is often for urgent reasons and getting a test in time may not always be possible.

Q. Will there be any disruption to NZs supply chain? I.e. Will people notice any differences on the shelves?

No, the supply chain continues operating at all Alert Levels.

Q. Can someone travel for permitted reasons from Auckland to an Alert Level 2 area by car/truck/Van. Can they stop along the way for necessities (food/toilet/petrol etc)?

People who are travelling for permitted personal or business reasons are able to stop along the way for necessities.

They must wear a face covering when visiting most businesses or services, keep 2-metre distancing from others, and maintain good hygiene including regular hand washing or sanitising.

Q. Can someone travel from Northland through Auckland and to their work in the Waikato?

There will be the ability for people to travel through Auckland if someone in Northland for instance, needs to get to the Waikato for their work.

But people will need to travel directly without stopping while going through Auckland. You will also need to carry evidence of the purpose of travel and the location where you are travelling to. You will not be required to have evidence of a test.

Q. Do you need to wear face coverings and scan on the ferry? Can I take it off when on board?

Face coverings are being enforced for boarding.

When on the ferry, it may not be required to wear a face covering for the whole journey, as long as 2-metre physical distancing can be maintained from other passengers.

Q: Do I have to wear a face covering when taking a taxi or Uber?

Yes, face coverings are mandatory in taxis and ride-shares for both passengers and drivers.

Q: Can I go to work at Alert Level 2?

Businesses and workplaces legally must operate safely.

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).

Businesses legally must display NZ COVID Tracer QR codes, and many are required to ensure records are kept (whether via the NZ COVID Tracer app or otherwise).

All businesses are encouraged to use alternative ways of working if possible.

Q. Can I stand on public transport?

Public transport must be seated only.

Sports and Recreation

Q. What recreation activities can I do at Alert Level 2?

Most recreation and sport is permitted – as long as it meets the Alert Level 2 requirements. Information about recreation at Alert Level 2 can be found on the [Unite Against COVID-19 website](#).

Q: Can I take my children to the playground at Alert Level 2?

At Alert Level 2, playgrounds can open.

Q: Can I play team sport at Level 2?

Yes, team sports are allowed at Alert Level 2, as long as they meet mandatory record keeping requirements and comply with the limitations on gatherings.

Shopping and Services

Q: Where can I shop and what services can I access at Alert Level 2?

You can go in-store to shop, but you will need keep 2 metres apart from people. Wearing a face covering is recommended.

Full information on shopping and services allowed to open at Alert Level 2 can be found on the [Unite Against COVID-19 website](#).

Q: Can I go to a restaurant or café?

Cafes, restaurants and takeaways can open at Alert Level 2, and must meet certain public health requirements.

You can dine in at cafes and restaurants. Public-facing staff – including baristas, cashiers, waiters and front-of-house – must wear face coverings.

Food delivery services, such as Deliveroo and Uber Eats, can operate at Alert Level 2.

Hospitality businesses legally must keep groups of customers separated and seated. Maximum of 50 people indoors or 100 people outdoors in a defined space.

Q. Can hairdressers, nail salons, tattoo parlours, and other close contact businesses open at Alert Level 2?

At Alert Level 2, businesses offering close contact personal care services, such as hairdressers and nail salons, can open.

Staff must wear face coverings for close contact services. For example a driving instructor, where 2-metre distancing is not possible in the car, must wear a face covering.

They also must meet other public health requirements including mandatory record keeping.

Q: Are animal and pet care services open at Alert Level 2?

Veterinary services can open. If you are self-isolating, phone your veterinarian before you visit them or they visit you. If you are sick, call and reschedule.

Q: Can I have a tradesperson come to my house?

At Alert Level 2, plumbers, electricians, and tradespeople can come into your home. They will need to follow public health guidelines. Home-based cleaners can also work.

Q: Will post shops open?

Yes. NZ Post will also continue to deliver mail and courier drivers will continue to make contactless deliveries.

Doing business

Full information on doing business at Alert Level 2 can be found at the [Unite Against COVID-19 website](#).

Q: Who can operate at Alert Level 2?

Business premises and workplaces can open for staff and customers provided they meet public health requirements.

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.

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.

Q: Can event facilities operate?

Event facilities, including cinemas, stadiums, concert venues and casinos can have up to 50 people indoors and 100 people outdoors. You can have more than 50 people in an event facility, but only if the people are in separate 'defined spaces' at all times and there should not be direct airflow between these spaces.

Bathroom and food facilities also need to be separated, or have other systems to stop different groups of people mingling.

Q: My staff can't work from home. What should I do?

If you own or run a business where staff cannot work home, make sure:

- employees keep 1 metre apart.
- you provide hygiene and cleaning products so workers can clean and disinfect shared surfaces, and wash and dry their hands.
- you display your QR code and have an alternative contact tracing system for people who cannot access a smartphone.

Q: Will record-keeping be mandatory for my business at Alert Level 2?

Record keeping will become a requirement for people aged 12 and over at all Alert Levels for busy places and events from 11.59pm Tuesday 7 September. This is so contact tracing can happen quickly and may help prevent Alert Level changes. For more information about whether record-keeping will be mandatory for your business, see the [Unite Against COVID-19 website](#).

Q: Will mask-wearing be mandatory for my business at Alert Level 2?

You legally must wear a face covering if you are a customer or an employee involving customer contact at a business or service operating at Alert Level 2.

You legally must wear a face covering:

- on public transport and at departure points, for example airports, train stations and bus stops
- on flights
- in taxi or ride-share vehicles — drivers and passengers
- when visiting healthcare facilities
- if you are a delivery driver to residential addresses
- inside any businesses and services that are open and involve customer contact, for example supermarkets, pharmacies, hospitality venues, takeaways, and petrol stations
- in the public areas of courts and tribunals, local and central government agencies, and social service providers with customer service counters.

Q: Can my business receive assistance at Alert Level 2?

Yes. Some support for businesses remains in place at Alert Level 2. See the Unite Against COVID-19 [website](#) for more information.

Q: What about travel to Alert Level 4 regions for workers?

There will be new obligations for businesses and services at both Alert Level 4 to have systems and processes in place to minimise travel for workers and manage the risk of spreading COVID-19 for workers who do travel.

Wherever possible, businesses should be enabling their workers to continue working from home. Businesses should think about which of their workers need to travel, if any, and only allow those who need to travel to do so.

Where workers do need to travel to work, businesses should put in place mitigations for the risk this may create. Examples include rotating shifts to minimise the number of people they have contact with at work, and providing meals so that workers do not need to visit the supermarket or food businesses while at work.

Only Alert Level 4 businesses and services can travel across the Auckland Alert Level boundary. People will need to carry evidence of travel, and businesses should only allow workers that absolutely need to travel across the boundary to do so.

Education

Q. Are schools open at Alert Level 2? When will schools reopen at Alert Level 2?

Alert level 2 begins at 11:59pm on Tuesday 7 September, a extra day has been allowed for schools to prepare for reopening. Schools are expected to reopen to students on Thursday 9 September.

Schools and early learning services are open for children and young people Years 1 – 10 whose parents or carers need to go to work and there is no one at home to supervise them.

Schools and early learning services may have a reduced capacity to have tamariki onsite. It is important that this capacity is reserved for those who really need it.

Schools and families will work together to figure out which students need to physically return to schools, and there will be a range of different needs in every community. The governing bodies of schools have the option to bring some Year 12 and 13 students back to school for face-to-face learning. They need to apply to the Ministry of Education to do so.

Q: Will face coverings be required in schools?

Staff in early learning services and schools are not required to wear face coverings at Alert Level 2.

Health officials have advised against the mandatory use of face coverings in schools for a range of reasons, most particularly because face coverings that are handled incorrectly or are moved around can present a greater risk than no covering. They are however strongly recommended at schools for those aged over 12 and tertiary institutions.

Q. Are universities open at Alert Level 2?

At Alert Level 2, tertiary education providers can open with additional health measures in place.

Q: Can I return home from university halls?

Students can move within Alert Level 2 regions.

They cannot move out of their accommodation in an Alert Level 4 area. This includes moving somewhere else in an Alert Level 2 or returning to their primary home in an Alert Level 4 area.

Students are strongly discouraged from moving into or returning to student accommodation at Alert Level 4, unless it is an emergency.

Housing

More information can be found at the [Unite Against COVID-19 website](#).

Can I move house at Alert Level 2?

At Alert Level 2 you can move house, unless the house is within Alert Level 4. Travel remains restricted into Alert Level 4.

Can I buy or sell a home at Alert Level 2?

You can buy or sell a property at Alert Level 2. Open homes and auctions can take place in person, or happen remotely.

You cannot travel to an Alert Level 4 region to view a property.

Can property inspection and maintenance happen at Alert Level 2?

You can have a tradesperson come to your house to do maintenance. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

Tradespeople and other workers do not need to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) when they come into your house, but they need to keep 2 metres away at all times. We recommend you move to a different room while they are working.

Do not invite people to your home for maintenance if anyone in your household is unwell.

If you are a landlord, you can carry out any property inspections. You can also do virtual inspections if the tenant agrees.

Gatherings

Q. Are gatherings like funerals or weddings allowed?

The virus changed with Delta, and so that means we need to adjust too.

Up to 50 people will be able to attend indoor gatherings and events, and 100 people for outdoor gatherings and events.

In Alert Level 2 tangihanga and funerals are to be kept at 50 people or less indoors, 100 people outdoors.

Organisers must collect everyone's details for contact tracing and maintain 2-metre distancing where possible.

Larger formal tangihanga/funerals can be held safely once we return to Alert Level 1.

Q. Are gatherings like church services and other religious ceremonies allowed?

The virus changed with Delta, and so that means we need to adjust too.

Up to 50 people will be able to attend indoor gatherings and events, and 100 people for outdoor gatherings and events.

For religious ceremonies this includes things like taking extra caution around singing and communion.

Q. Can I have people over to my home, for a party, BBQ or pot-luck?

Up to 50 people will be able to attend indoor events.

Keep a record of who attends, for contact tracing purposes if needed.