

Business Operations at Alert Level 2

Fact Sheet

GOLDEN RULES FOR BUSINESS AT ALERT LEVEL 2

Do everything you can to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission at work — we all have a part to play in keeping each other safe.

1. COVID-19 is still out there. Play it safe.
2. Most businesses can operate if they can do so safely. Alternative ways of working are still encouraged where possible.
3. Talk with your workers to identify risks and ways to manage them.
4. Ask everyone, workers, contractors and customers, with cold or flu-like symptoms to stay away from your premises.
5. Keep groups of customers at least 1 metre apart.
6. Keep contact-tracing records of anyone who will have close interaction (workers, contractors or customers).
7. Reduce the number of shared surfaces, and regularly disinfect them.
8. Wash your hands. Wash your hands. Wash your hands.

WORKPLACES AND BUSINESSES

At Alert Level 2 businesses can operate if they're able to do so safely.

ENGAGING WITH CUSTOMERS

At Alert Level 2 businesses can have customers on their premises if they can meet public health requirements. This means businesses should:

- have good contact registers, or contact tracing records, in place to record everyone who you interact with on your premises

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- maintain physical distancing of 1 metre between groups of customers, or 2 metres if not possible to keep contact tracing records
- not have groups larger than 10 people
- maintain a 2 hour time limit for groups to be on your premises.

Services can also be provided on customers' premises, for example, cleaning and home help.

Most businesses can open their premises to the public:

- cafes, restaurants, and bars for dining
- hardware, gardening, and clothing retailers
- butchers, bakeries, and fishmongers

Hospitality businesses should keep groups seated, separated, and use a single server if possible. This means each group has one server, though servers can each serve more than one table.

WORK INVOLVING CLOSE PERSONAL CONTACT

For some businesses, close personal contact is required to deliver a service. This includes:

- Hairdressers
- Home help providers.

These businesses can operate if they have measures like:

- Have a robust contact tracing system in place
- Maintain good hygiene practices
- Minimise contact to the extent possible.

Specific guidance for key sectors is being developed by Government and will be available soon.

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DOING BUSINESS SAFELY

The key public health requirements stay the same at Alert Level 2. Businesses should maintain hygiene measures, including physical distancing, hand washing and regularly cleaning surfaces.

All businesses are encouraged to use alternative ways of working if possible. This means businesses that don't normally have customers on their premises could continue to have staff work from home.

If workers are sick with symptoms of COVID-19, they should stay home.

Self-isolation advice if you're unwell

HOW THE GUIDANCE CAN BE APPLIED IN DIFFERENT WORKPLACES

WORKPLACE PREMISES ONLY ACCESSED BY STAFF

For example: construction, forestry, manufacturing, research institutions or film studios.

In all cases, the applicable public health measures must be followed.

- Visit the MPI site for information specific to primary industries.
- For information specific to the building and construction sector visit Building Performance.

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- Building and construction work can be done.
- Call centres can run from premises.
- A financial advice firm can open its office.
- Food and beverage production and processing firms and their premises can operate.
- A magazine publisher can open its office.
- A manufacturing plant can operate.

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- Work can be done on film and TV sets.
- Forestry (including wood processing) work can happen.
- All parts of the wool value chain can operate.
- Flower growing and distribution can be done.
- Science and research institutions can operate.

WORKPLACE PREMISES ACCESSED BY THE PUBLIC OR CUSTOMERS

For example: retail, hospitality, hairdressers, entertainment venues and gyms.

In all cases, the applicable public health measures must be followed.

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- Supermarkets can open.
- Pharmacies can open.
- Dairies can open.
- Petrol stations can open.
- Hardware and DIY stores can open.
- Agricultural supply stores and pet stores can open.
- Animal and pet care services, such as dog walking and pet grooming, can operate.
- Clothing stores can open.
- Bars, cafes and restaurants can open, subject to physical distancing and conditions on gatherings (e.g. No more than 100 people indoors) being met.
- Nightclubs are unlikely to be able to operate in line with conditions on gatherings.
- Entertainment and tourist facilities (such as cinema, theatres, art galleries, mini golf, arcades, bungee jumping, or bowling alleys) can open, with measures to keep people safe (e.g. physical distancing and contact tracing registers).
- Licenced supermarkets can sell alcohol. Other alcohol off-licence holders can also sell alcohol. Sellers must meet all requirements of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act.
- General retail stores (e.g. Selling books, toys, or sports goods, charity and second-hand stores) can open.

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- Second-hand stores should pay attention to cleaning guidance.
- Shopping centres/malls can open.
- Hairdressers, barbers, nail salons and non-medical massage services can open.
- Exercise facilities and classes (e.g. Gyms, yoga studios and dance school) can open.

WORKERS GOING TO CUSTOMERS OR A THIRD PARTY PREMISES

For example: couriers, moving house, open homes, client meetings or home repairs. In all cases, the applicable public health measures must be followed.

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- A real estate firm can open its office.
- Open homes can take place in person, subject to conditions on gatherings.
- Property management functions may be carried out in person.
- Couriers and parcel services can operate. Deliveries should be contactless.
- Removal/moving companies can operate.
- Plumbers, electricians and tradespeople can work on customers' property (e.g. In homes).
- Client-facing workers (such as sales and business development people) can meet with clients in person.
- Home cleaners can work.
- Door-to-door sales should only operate if they are able to meet contact tracing requirements for businesses.

WORKPLACES WITH NO PREMISES

For example outdoor tours or driver instruction.

In all cases, the applicable public health measures must be followed.

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- Outdoor adventure activities (e.g. Guided walks, kayaking tours, quad bike adventures or scenic flights or boat trips) can operate.
- Driver instruction and licencing can happen.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR ALL BUSINESSES

1. WHAT PHYSICAL DISTANCING MEASURES SHOULD MY WORKPLACE HAVE IN PLACE UNDER ALERT LEVEL 2?

At Alert Level 2 businesses can have customers on their premises if they can meet public health requirements. This means businesses should:

- Have a contact tracing system in place to record everyone who you interact with on your premises
- Maintain physical distancing of 1 metre between groups of customers.

Services can also be provided on customers' premises, for example, cleaning and home help.

This means that most businesses can open their premises to the public, including:

- Bars and cafes
- Hardware, gardening, and clothing retailers
- Butchers, bakeries, and fishmongers.

Hospitality businesses should keep groups seated, separated, and use a single server if possible.

2. WHAT ARE SOME "ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF WORKING" BUSINESSES CAN USE?

Alternative ways of working could include remote working, shift-based working to limit the number of people on site, staggering meal breaks, or flexible work arrangements. If this involves changes to contracted hours or conditions, this should be mutually agreed and negotiated in good faith.

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3. I CAN TECHNICALLY WORK FROM HOME, BUT IT'S REALLY INCONVENIENT, E.G. BECAUSE MY IT SERVICES ARE TOO SLOW, OR I WANT ACCESS TO PRINTING. CAN I GO INTO THE OFFICE AT ALERT LEVEL 3?

You must work from home at Alert Level 3 unless that is not possible. This isn't always very convenient, and may result in people being less productive than they otherwise would have been in an office. However we all need to play our part in stopping the spread of COVID-19. Even if it is inconvenient, people still need to work from home wherever possible.

Under Alert 2, you may return to the office, though working from home is still encouraged.

4. CAN I TRAVEL FOR WORK?

At Alert Level 4, only essential workers can travel within or outside of their regions for work, where it is necessary to do so. There are additional, limited reasons for travel between regions, such as medical reasons.

At Alert Level 3, everyone can travel for work within their region, or to a neighbouring region. You should only travel if it is necessary. Essential workers can travel outside of their regions, where it is necessary to do so.

At Alert Level 2, travel between regions is allowed.

5. WHEN CAN I MEET WITH NEW OR EXISTING CLIENTS AT MY BUSINESS PREMISES?

At Alert Levels 3 and 4, you should meet with existing or new clients remotely, unless this is in the course of providing an essential service. You can meet clients in person on business premises at Levels 1 and 2.

6. WHEN CAN MY BUSINESS PRODUCE GOODS FOR EXPORT?

You can produce goods for export and ship them at Alert Levels 1, 2 and 3.

At Alert Level 4, you can only keep manufacturing if you are providing an essential service, based on the New Zealand definition. Food and beverage exports are allowed, but all other exports are not considered essential. All freight may be distributed, including entering and leaving the country, but essential services and goods may be prioritised.

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At Alert Level 3 & 4, only essential workers can travel within or outside of their regions for work, where it is necessary to do so. There are additional, limited reasons for travel between regions, such as medical reasons.

7. WHAT IF I SEE SOMEONE NOT COMPLYING WITH THE ALERT LEVEL GUIDELINES?

If you believe someone isn't sticking to the rules, you can report it to the [COVID-19 compliance centre \(external link\)](#). If it's an emergency, you should still ring 111.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR RETAIL AND HOSPITALITY

1. I OPERATE A RETAIL STORE. WHAT DO THE DIFFERENT ALERT LEVELS MEAN FOR ME?

At Alert Level 4, you can only sell essential non-food goods to customers by contactless delivery if you are registered to do so with the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. Supermarkets, dairies, petrol stations and pharmacies can keep their stores open for customers, but food/drink cannot be consumed on-site.

At Alert Level 3, you can sell any goods to customers by phone/online order and contactless delivery or collection. You cannot open your physical retail storefront for customers to enter unless you are a supermarket, dairy, petrol station or pharmacy. Customers can also collect goods through drive-through or contact-less pick-up, such as click and collect, instead of delivery.

At Alert Levels 1 and 2, you may open for customers to come in to your physical store, subject to the public health measures required at those alert levels including distancing, hygiene, contact tracing (see below) and managed entry.

Specific sector guidance is being prepared and will be available on the worksafe website.

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2. DO MASS GATHERING RESTRICTIONS APPLY TO CUSTOMER ACCESS TO RETAIL PREMISES, INCLUDING LARGE RETAILERS SUCH AS SHOPPING MALLS?

No, gathering restrictions do not apply to customer access to retail premises. Retail businesses should use physical distancing guidelines to manage customer access to their premises.

3. WHAT PHYSICAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES APPLY TO CUSTOMERS WHO ACCESS RETAIL PREMISES?

Physical distancing of one metre should be maintained. This should be accompanied by controlling measures including good hygiene measures (such as hand hygiene and regular cleaning) and attendance records (for contact tracing purposes).

Retail business should manage customer entry and exit to achieve physical distancing. Customers are likely to prefer retail premises that are able to achieve good physical distancing and COVID-19 risk management.

Where contact tracing measures are not in place, such as at supermarkets, 2 metre distancing will need to be maintained.

4. WHAT ARE THE SPECIFIC RULES FOR SUPERMARKETS, DAIRIES, PETROL STATIONS AND PHARMACIES AT THE DIFFERENT ALERT LEVELS?

Supermarkets can remain open at all alert levels and have customers on premises. Public health measures may mean there are some changes to how they operate, such as a capacity limit.

Pharmacies can remain open at all alert levels and have customers on premises. Similar to supermarkets, public health measures may mean changes to how they operate, such as managed entry to pharmacies.

Dairies and petrol stations can remain open at all alert levels.

At Alert Level 4, customers should go into dairies and petrol stations on a one-in-one-out basis. These businesses cannot sell food or drink that has been prepared or cooked on-site (e.g. Coffee, milkshakes, or made-to-order sandwiches), but they can sell food that has been prepared and packaged off-site by a supplier (even if it needs heating, e.g. Pies, sausage rolls).

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At Alert Level 3, prepared food and drink can be bought and sold, but cannot be consumed by customers onsite. Dairies and petrol stations need to operate safely, including managing customer entry and movement to maintain two metre physical distancing. In the case of smaller stores this will likely mean limiting access to one customer at time (as has been the guidance for dairies under Alert Level 4, for example).

At Alert Level 2, they can operate if they can do so safely.

5. WHEN WILL RESTAURANTS, BARS AND CAFES OPEN?

Restaurants, bars and cafes can open at Alert Levels 1 and 2, subject to the public health measures required at both of those alert levels and restrictions on gatherings, for example distancing between tables.

Restaurants, bars and cafes cannot open their premises to customers at Alert Level 3 and 4. At Alert Level 3, they can sell prepared food and non-alcoholic beverages by contactless delivery and collection (including drive-through). At Alert Level 4, they cannot sell any prepared food or beverages.

MPI has information for food businesses about operating during Alert Level 3.

[Re-opening or making changes to a food business in Alert Level 3 \(external link\)](#) — Ministry for Primary Industries
[Checklist: Re-opening a food business after COVID-19 Level 4 \(external link\)](#) — Ministry for Primary Industries

6. HOW CAN MY CAFÉ, RESTAURANT OR BAR OPEN SAFELY?

At Alert Level 2 cafes, restaurants and bars can open, and have customers on their premises. However, there are requirements to make sure that everyone is kept safe.

- Your workers should still stay 1 metre apart from each other where practicable.
- One server for each group, and keep the same servers throughout.
- Everyone in your venue must be seated.
- Different groups must be kept 1 metre apart.
- You will need to limit the number of people inside to a maximum of 100 people at any time so that physical distancing can be maintained.

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- Make sure that people don't need to queue near other people to enter, pay, or go to the bathroom.
- Provide good facilities for people to wash their hands thoroughly and regularly.
- Maintain a contact register with details of everyone that has entered your premises.
- You can still do delivery, drive-through or contactless pick up by customers. Try to avoid having people queue, and if they are queueing make sure they're able to maintain physical distancing.

7. WHAT COUNTS AS A DRIVE-THROUGH? CAN A STORE TAKE PHONE ORDERS AND DELIVER THE GOODS TO PEOPLE PARKED NEARBY?

Drive-throughs include already established facilities (such as at fast food outlets), and temporary drive-throughs (such as ones set up in retail car parks). Businesses can only use or establish drive-through facilities if they can meet the public health requirements. This would include physical distancing, only accepting contactless payment methods wherever possible, and contact tracing.

For example, a café can allow phone-based ordering and payment, and then deliver the food or drinks to a customer parked in their car park in a way that avoids contact.

Temporary drive-through facilities should only be established where it is appropriate. Businesses should ensure they have the necessary permits and operate any drive-through safely.

8. CAN TAKEAWAY BOOTHS SERVE PEDESTRIAN-ONLY CUSTOMERS?

Takeaway booths can operate if they meet public health guidelines (e.g. Physical distancing).

For example, a coffee booth may accept online or phone-based orders and place coffees on a table for customers to collect. This should only be done if their physical environment allows for sufficient physical distancing by customers.

9. CAN PEOPLE WITHOUT BANKING FACILITIES PAY IN CASH?

Cash should only be accepted where the customer has no alternative, and the business has measures in place to ensure the cash is handled safely. Measures could include:

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- Only accepting cash using self-check out kiosks
- Hand sanitisation or washing after handling cash
- If relevant, following the procedures outlined in a business's safe food handling plan.

The Reserve Bank of New Zealand has more guidance about handling cash.

[Frequently asked questions about cash \(external link\)](#) — The Reserve Bank of New Zealand.

10. WHY ISN'T [X STORE] OPEN EVEN THOUGH THEY'RE ALLOWED TO BE?

This will depend on the individual business' circumstances. The business may have determined its employees can work from home, or the work could not be done safely in that location.

11. HOW DO I KNOW THAT DELIVERIES ARE SAFE TO EAT?

All the usual food safety measures to prevent foodborne illness, including washing hands, continue to apply. Additional measures to prevent infectious disease in workplaces also apply.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR CLOSE CONTACT SERVICES

Business that require close physical contact, such as barbers and hairdressers, can operate at Alert Level 2.

However, you may need to operate differently to reduce the risk of transmission. This could include extra measures such as:

- Keeping customers 1-metre apart from each other at all times, including while waiting.
- Disinfecting surfaces between customers.
- Sanitising equipment between customers, or using single use equipment.

Detailed guidance is being developed and will be released soon.

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Barbers, hairdressers, nail salons, waxing bars, eyebrow grooming shops cannot open at Alert Levels 3 and 4. This also includes businesses going to people's homes to do these services. This restriction is because of the level of close, personal contact involved in these services, and the risk that would pose to public health.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR SERVICES

1. WHAT IF I NEED SOME REPAIR WORK DONE AT HOME?

If you are able to safely do this repair work yourself, you can do so at any alert level.

If you need to get supplies from a hardware store, you can do this at Alert Levels 1, 2 and 3. At Alert Level 3, you won't be able to physically go into a hardware store. You will instead need to order by phone/online and have your supplies delivered, or collect them (e.g. Through a drive-through system).

You can get tradespeople to come to your home to do any repair work at Alert Levels 1, 2 and 3. However, you and your tradespeople need to ensure the relevant public health measures at each alert level are met. This includes the physical distancing requirements at Alert Levels 2 and 3.

Tradespeople will be able to get the supplies they need for any such work at Alert Levels 1 through 4.

2. WHAT WORK CAN CONSTRUCTION FIRMS DO?

During Alert Level 3, construction firms can do their normal work, so far as they can operate safely in line with the guidelines available on the [worksafe website \(external link\)](#). They may also allow staff workers to travel inter-regionally for construction projects related to essential services and critical infrastructure. Their workers can't travel inter-regionally for other work, unless it's to a region adjacent to a worker's home region.

3. WHEN CAN I BUY/SELL A HOUSE, OR MOVE HOUSE?

House sales and purchases are allowed at all alert levels, but some of the activities involved, e.g. Open homes and inspections, may need to happen in different ways because of limits on people movement and interactions, particularly at Alert Levels 3 and 4.

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Alert Levels 1 and 2: The physical interactions involved in house sale, purchase and settlement (e.g. Open homes and inspections) are possible at Alert Levels 1 and 2, subject to any conditions at those alert levels. For example, open homes will need to comply with contact tracing and distancing requirements.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR EMPLOYMENT MATTERS

1. MY EMPLOYER IS ASKING ME TO COME TO WORK, BUT I HAVE HEALTH CONCERNS AND DON'T WANT TO. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Employers and employees need to work together to slow the spread of COVID-19, protect New Zealand and keep each other safe. This means that normal obligations to keep in regular contact and to act in good faith are more important than ever.

If you might be sick with COVID-19 or have had close contact with someone with COVID-19, you should not go into work at any alert level. Businesses should not allow or ask such employees to work. Your employer may be able to access the Essential Workers Leave Scheme.

If you or someone you live with may be at higher risk of severe illness from contracting COVID-19, you should discuss these concerns with your employer. Employees and employers should agree whether such workers can work from home or change their workplace arrangements to minimise the risks.

Businesses need to meet their health and safety obligations at all alert levels, including engaging staff and managing risks. If a worker is concerned these are not being met, they can raise it with their health and safety representative, union, or notify worksafe.

2. MY EMPLOYER IS ASKING ME TO COME TO WORK, BUT I CAN'T ACCESS CHILDCARE AND SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Employers and employees need to work together to slow the spread of COVID-19, protect New Zealand and keep each other safe. This means that normal obligations to keep in regular contact and to act in good faith are more important.

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You should discuss your situation with your employer in the first instance. There may be options such as flexible work arrangements or working from home. If you are an essential worker, you can access the Government's childcare scheme. Schools and ECE centres will be open at Alert Levels 1 – 3, but may not be able to have all enrolled children on-site. If you are unable to work, you should discuss with your employer what leave arrangements can be agreed, including the use of annual or special leave. If your employer is receiving the Wage Subsidy, they must generally pass the full amount received on to the employee.

You may also wish to discuss your situation with Work and Income.

3. I AGREED TO A PAY CUT WHILE AT ALERT LEVEL 4. SHOULD MY WAGES RETURN TO NORMAL IF I GO BACK TO WORKING MY NORMAL HOURS OF WORK AT A LOWER ALERT LEVEL?

As a general rule, employees should be paid, as normal, for each and every hour that they work.

Some employers and employees may have agreed a reduction in hours during Alert Level 4. If hours worked then increase to normal levels at other alert levels, employees should be paid as normal.

Some employers and employees may have agreed to a reduction in pay, for example to ensure the financial viability of the businesses and to avoid the need for redundancies. Any return to standard wages would depend on what was agreed. Any reduction in pay must have been mutually agreed and negotiated in good faith. Employees should have had an appropriate amount of time to consider their employer's proposal.

The minimum wage and your employment agreement apply in all cases.

4. WHEN CAN I HIRE NEW EMPLOYEES?

You can hire employees at any alert level. However interviews should be done remotely at Alert Levels 3 and 4. You can carry out in-person interviews at Alert Levels 1 and 2.

For [advice on more COVID-19 related employment matters \(external link\)](#), visit Employment New Zealand.

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USEFUL LINKS

<https://www.business.govt.nz/covid-19/>

<https://covid19.govt.nz/>

<https://hospitality.org.nz/coronavirus-updates>

<http://www.retail.org.nz/advice/covid-19-safety-plan>

<https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/alert-level-2-restrictions-announced>

WHERE TO GET ADVICE

Waikato Business Support

Waikato Business Support is a new phone-based support service that provides advice and assistance to businesses affected by the COVID-19 crisis.

Waikato Business Support has been established to help businesses survive, revive and grow post COVID-19.

Here you will find resources and access to support available to help you navigate your way through this uncertain time.

W: www.waikatobusinesssupport.nz E: info@waikatobusinesssupport.nz P: 07 929 6473

Te Waka Business Advisory Services

The Government has allocated additional funding to the Regional Business Partner Network to support New Zealand businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Covid-19 Business Advisory Funding will provide support in areas such as HR, health and wellbeing, business continuity, cashflow and finance management, strategy and digital capability.

Te Waka's Business Advisory Team will deliver this programme with the support of the service provider network, regional organisations and district councils.

W: www.tewaka.nz E: businessgrowth@tewaka.nz P: 07 857 0538