

Alert Level 2

21 May 2020

This document has information and guidance about what Alert Level 2 means for disabled people and their family and whānau with links to further information.

The rules under Alert Level 2 should be the same for disabled people as they are for non-disabled people. If the rules are more restrictive for disabled people that could be a breach of your human rights.

Alert Level 2

At Alert Level 2 you will be able to do more activities, but you should still do everything you can to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Protect yourself and others at Alert Level 2

Under Alert Level 2 you still need to continue to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

You should:

- stay at home if you are sick, don't go to work or meet family and friends
- self-isolate if you have tested positive for COVID-19, are waiting to find out your test results, or if you have been in contact with someone who has COVID-19. You will be told when it is safe to go out again
- if you have symptoms of a cold or the flu call your doctor or Healthline and ask them if you should get tested for COVID-19
- keep using good hygiene - wash your hands often for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, cough/sneeze into a tissue or your elbow, and clean surfaces often that you and other people touch often (especially doorknobs, handrails, benches and other surfaces)
- keep physically apart from people when you are out in public
- if you are at high risk of becoming very unwell if you get COVID-19 you need to continue to take extra care to keep yourself safe
- do everything you can to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading – we all have a part to play in keeping each other safe.

What you can do at Alert Level 2

Alert Level 2 means you can do many of the activities you have missed – but you have to do so safely.

Visit friends and family

You can leave your home to connect with your friends, family and loved ones. You don't need to follow physical distancing with them so you can give them a hug.

You should check with people first before you visit them to make sure they want you to visit. If they are at high risk of becoming very unwell if they get COVID-19 they might prefer not to meet in person.

Have private gatherings in your home

You can have friends and family over to your home, but gatherings are limited to up to 10 people. This includes the people who usually live in your house. If more than 10 people normally live in your house, then no more can join.

Play it safe — keep surfaces clean, wash your hands, and keep the numbers low so you can practice safe physical distancing.

There is no time limit restriction for private events or gatherings but keeping them short (under two hours) is encouraged.

Go to private gatherings outside your home

You can attend private gatherings in controlled settings outside of your home. Gatherings include:

- weddings
- family events
- religious services
- private functions, like a birthday.

Gatherings must:

- have no more than 10 people per group, with 1-metre distance between each of the groups
- keep high hygiene standards
- record attendees to ensure contact tracing can be conducted if necessary.

There is no time limit restriction for private events or gatherings but keeping them short (under two hours) is encouraged.

You shouldn't participate in any gatherings if you have COVID-19 symptoms or if you need to be in isolation for any reason.

You can find further advice for private or public gatherings and events here:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-advice-public-and-private-events-and-gatherings>

Go to restaurants, cafes and public places

You can go to public places like restaurants, cafes, movie theatres, museums, and libraries.

All public venues must keep records to enable contact tracing and manage their numbers to ensure that:

- every individual or group of 10 is kept 1-metre apart
- no group has more than 10 people.

Organisers of public events and gatherings may wish to also limit events and gatherings to under two hours.

Always follow good hygiene practices yourself and do not go out if you are sick.

You can find further advice for private or public gatherings and events here:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-advice-public-and-private-events-and-gatherings>

Go shopping (retail)

You can go to retail stores, but you need to keep 2-metres apart from other customers. Retail stores do not need to collect customer's details for contact tracing so long as physical distancing is applied.

Go to funerals and tangihanga

Up to 50 people can attend funerals and tangihanga at Alert Level 2, as long as the funeral director registers with the Ministry of Health.

Remember to keep your distance from others and wash your hands. Talk to your funeral director to find out more about the rules for attending, and what you will need to do.

You can find more information on funerals and tangihanga here: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-deaths-funerals-and-tangihanga>

Get your hair cut, see a beauty therapist or other similar services

You can go to the hairdresser, barber or beauty therapist.

They will need to follow good hygiene practices and keep a list of the contact details of people attending, to enable contact tracing if necessary.

They may choose to wear a face mask because they cannot keep at least 1-metre apart from you.

See a physiotherapist, podiatrist or other similar health care providers

You can go to the physiotherapist, podiatrist, audiologists and other health care providers. When you go to an appointment with a health care provider, they will try to stay 1-metre away from you. If they need to be closer to do their job, they may wear personal protective equipment called PPE.

Go back to school

Early learning services, schools and tertiary education providers (such as universities, polytechnics and Wānanga) are all open for all ages under Alert Level 2. Schools and early learning services will be in touch with parents about their children returning at Alert level 2. You might continue distance learning if you can't attend school, for example, if you need to self-isolate.

Residential Specialist Schools and Day Specialist Schools including satellite units will be open for children to attend. School transport will start again.

Staff from the Ministry of Education, resource teachers and school staff will continue to support children with learning support needs by phone and Skype if children are at a higher risk of getting severe symptoms from COVID-19, or they need to self-isolate. You can find more information here:

<http://www.education.govt.nz/covid-19/alert-level-2-faqs-for-schools-and-early-learning-centres/>

Go back to work

Your employer will let you know how you are going to work at Alert Level 2. You might be asked to work in different ways such as:

- working from home (if you can)
- working in shifts - at different times from your colleagues
- staying 1-metre away from other people at work
- having your meal break at a different time

- taking flexible leave.

You should talk with your employer to identify any risks and ways to manage them.

You can find employment matters about COVID-19 here: www.employment.govt.nz/leave-and-holidays/other-types-of-leave/coronavirus-workplace/

If you're at high risk of becoming very unwell from COVID-19, your employer may be able to pay you to take leave. Find out more here: www.employment.govt.nz/leave-and-holidays/other-types-of-leave/coronavirus-workplace/leave-support-scheme/

Access health services

It is important that if you are unwell or undergoing treatment that you still contact your doctor. Doctors and health centres are open in all alert levels. Most doctors and nurses are delivering services differently during the COVID-19 restrictions and will talk to you over the phone before deciding whether they need to see you in person. If you are seen in person, your doctor or other staff may be wearing PPE such as a mask, gloves and/or a gown.

If your doctor or health centre is not available, you could phone Healthline (free) on **0800 611 116** and check what other services are available.

If it is a medical emergency get help by calling 111.

You can find more information here: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-health-advice-general-public/managing-your-health-conditions-during-covid-19>.

Travel in your region and to other regions in New Zealand

You can travel, but make sure you do it in a safe way. You must not travel to events where more than 10 people are attending.

Ways you can stay safe while travelling:

- use public transport but avoid peak times if possible
- don't sit next to, or stand near, someone you don't know
- if you're flying or taking other forms of transport that involve bookings such as buses, follow the physical distancing instructions from your transport operators
- you must not travel if you have symptoms of COVID-19, you are waiting for your COVID-19 test result, or if you need to self-isolate
- practise good hygiene – handwashing, sneezing and coughing
- visit the COVID-19 website for more information on travel and transport at Alert Level 2.

Total mobility

You can travel for free on Total Mobility services (up to a regional fare subsidy cap) until 30 June 2020. This also includes travelling in mobility taxis. This won't change even if we change Alert Level.

From 1 July 2020, the normal fare payment will start again. Fare collection is being introduced again on regular public transport services during Alert Level 2. However, this might happen at different times in different regions (because councils' have different ticketing systems).

For further information contact your local Total Mobility provider, or visit: <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/about-us/coronavirus-disease-covid-19-services-update/frequently-asked-questions/public-transport-services/#what-is-total-mobility-and-who-can-use-the-services>.

You should take extra precautions if you are more at risk

Some people such as those with underlying health conditions are more at risk of becoming very unwell from COVID-19. Under all alert levels you should take extra precautions to protect yourself from COVID-19. You can find more information about those at risk on the COVID-19 website here: <https://covid19.govt.nz/>.

If you are more at risk, you should think about whether you need to be extra safe during this time. You understand your body, your health conditions and what works best for you. Make choices based on your situation and decide which extra things you need to do in addition to regular guidelines.

You should talk to the people that you live with and anyone that you come into regular contact with (such as support workers) about how you want to keep yourself safe.

Extra precautions that you might want to take include:

- Discuss with your doctor what they think you should do in your situation.
- Limit the number of interactions you have with others.
- Maintain 2-metres physical distancing with people you don't know or from most people where you can.
- Continue to use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) when you receive support for personal cares such as feeding, toileting, washing. For further information on PPE see: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-workers/personal-protective-equipment-use-health-care>.
- You may want to negotiate with your employer/school about working or learning from home.
- You may also need to make changes to how your support is provided. You will need to talk to your provider and/or support workers about this, and it may involve making changes to someone's employment. For more information see: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-information-disabled-people-and-their-family-and-whanau/covid-19-getting-disability-support#supportguidance>.
- As we are going into winter and the flu season you may want to protect yourself from the flu. For more information, see 'How to get your flu vaccine' here: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-information-disabled-people-and-their-family-and-whanau/covid-19-how-get-your-flu-vaccine>.

Contact tracing

You might be asked to record your name, phone number and email address when you visit places such as shops or cafes. This is so that if someone gets COVID-19, we can quickly find the people they have been in contact with. We might then ask you to self-isolate and/or test you. This is called contact tracing and helps stop the spread of COVID-19. This means you need to remember where you have been and who you have been in contact with.

If lots of people are coming into your house (such as family, friends service people and support workers), you might want to record who is coming to see you and when. That way if someone who has visited you gets

COVID-19, the Ministry of Health can contact you and find out who has visited. You may want to keep a note of who visits you and where you go in a notebook or on your phone.

What if I think I have COVID-19?

You should do the same at any alert level. You should call your doctor if you are feeling unwell with any COVID-19 symptoms. Your doctor will talk with you and arrange for you to be tested if they think this is needed.

COVID-19 symptoms are:

- fever – this is when you feel really hot and have a temperature of 38 degrees or more
- a cough that is new or one that has been getting worse over a few days
- shortness of breath or finding it hard to breathe
- sore throat
- sneezing and runny nose
- temporary loss of smell.

You can find more information here: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-health-advice-general-public>.

Looking after your wellbeing

Even though life feels very different right now, moving into Alert Level 2 is one step closer to getting back to where we were before COVID-19. There are lots of things you can do to stay positive. You can find some ideas about looking after your wellbeing here: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-information-disabled-people-and-their-family-and-whanau/alert-level-2-disabled-people#wellbeing>.

If you need more help, or someone to talk to:

- Call or text **1737** to have a chat with a trained counsellor. They're available day and night, and texts and calls are free.

If you feel unsafe, please ask for help. If you are in immediate danger, you should phone or text 111. Police, ambulances and fire services are still operating at all Alert Levels. You can find more information here about what you should do if you feel unsafe: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-information-disabled-people-and-their-family-and-whanau/alert-level-2-disabled-people#home>

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

You can find the latest guidelines on PPE for disability support and care workers who work in your home here: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-workers/personal-protective-equipment-use-health-care>

Find the facts

Lots of people are talking about COVID-19 right now. It can be confusing when lots of people are saying different things. Make sure you get your information from official sources like the **COVID-19 website**, or the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Transport or Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment.

Disability Support Services at Alert Level 2

All services (disability and non-disability services) will need to follow the Alert Level 2 rules. This means that services will need to carefully and regularly clean surfaces that are touched often and keep detailed records of who uses the facilities and when for contact tracing. Everyone who uses the service must practice good hand hygiene, cough or sneeze into their elbow or tissue that is put in a bin and follow physical distancing.

In disability facilities, everyone should stay 1-metre apart where possible.

Facility staff should take extra care for people who are at high risk of becoming very unwell from COVID-19.

Day services

Day services can now open in a limited way following Alert Level 2 safety rules. They will need to follow physical distancing rules (1-metre apart), good hygiene measures and keep a record of people working at or attending the service for contact tracing.

Some of the day services might decide to allow some people to attend in the morning and others in the afternoon, or on alternate days. Your day service needs to work out how they can operate safely. Your day service will contact you to let you know when and how they are going to open safely.

If you always share transport with the same people to get to your day service, you do not need to keep 1-metre apart in your taxi or van. The taxi or van company will need to follow good cleaning and hygiene practices and keep a good record of who has been in the vehicle for contact tracing.

You will still need to stay at home if you are sick.

You should let your day service know if you do not want to attend. Your day service should continue to support you in different ways such as by video chat. Your day service will contact you to tell you what is going to happen.

Respite facilities

Facility-based respite centres are now open in a limited way following Alert Level 2 safety rules. This includes following physical distancing (1-metre apart) where possible, have good hygiene measures and keep a record for contact tracing.

Respite services will need to work out how they can operate safely. It is also important that they can give those families and whānau a break who need it most, some of whom might be in the 'at-risk' group.

You should contact your NASC for more information on what is available in your area.

Carer Support

There are no changes for Carer Support under Alert Level 2 compared to Alert Levels 3 and 4. You can continue to pay family members who you live with to provide you with a break. Please note that this flexibility is for Carer Support paid through disability support services only (i.e. not through DHBs).

Community residential services and residential services provided under the High and Complex Framework

Community residential services continue to operate under all alert levels. Under Alert Level 2, residential providers must follow the Alert Level 2 safety rules.

You do not need to physically distance from the people that you live with or support workers who have been part of your living arrangement (part of your bubble) during the different levels.

Support workers and residential providers should:

- follow guidelines for personal protective equipment (PPE), have good hand hygiene, cough or sneeze into their elbow or a tissue, and not come to work if they are sick or have been around someone who is sick
- where possible not provide care to lots of different people
- keep a record of the people they are in contact with, for contact tracing purposes.

Under Alert Level 2, you can visit with your family members and friends. When people come to visit you in your residential home, they must follow good hand hygiene, and cough/sneeze etiquette and keep 1-metre apart from you if they are not family members or close friends. Your residential provider will let you know how they plan to manage visits safely. You should call or text your family member's residential home first to let them know that you plan to visit so they can manage it safely. Anyone who has COVID-19 symptoms, have been in contact with someone with COVID-19, or who are sick, must not visit.

You should decide who should visit you in your residential home, however, if there are other people who live in the home who are at high risk of becoming very unwell from COVID-19, you, your family and providers should all agree who can visit and how people can stay safe.

You should also be supported to access activities, in a safe way, such as going to your favourite café (i.e. maintain 1-metre distance from other people, good hygiene, limits on the numbers of people gathering).

People who employ their own support workers (individualised funding, personal budgets)

At Alert Level 2, you can continue to use your funding to buy things that you couldn't before COVID-19. For example, you can pay for grocery delivery rather than pay a care or support worker to help you with shopping. **These purchases must be within your allocation, and your budget needs to last for your whole allocation.**

At Alert Level 2, you can also continue to employ family and whānau members who live with you, to support you, if your usual support worker is not available. If you decide to do this, you should talk to your IF host or coach, your connector or kaitūhono. You can find more information about employing your own support workers here: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-information-disabled-people-and-their-family-and-whanau/covid-19-getting-disability-support#supportguidance>.

You can apply to the Ministry of Social Development for funding if a support worker is unable to return to work because they:

- could be sick with COVID-19
- have had close contact with someone with COVID-19
- are at high risk of becoming very unwell from COVID-19.

This funding is called COVID-19 Leave Support. You can apply for this funding here:

<https://workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/covid-19-essential-workers-leave-support.html>

You should agree with your support worker on whether you want to keep any physical distance between you. If you are at high risk of becoming very unwell from COVID-19 you should talk to your support worker about working safely with you. See the latest guidance about when you should use PPE here:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19->

information-specific-audiences/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-workers/personal-protective-equipment-use-health-care.

Home and community support services

Home-based personal care services such as support with toileting, washing, feeding should be provided under Alert Level 2. Household management such as cleaning can also be provided under Alert Level 2.

Support workers who provide you with personal cares should:

- follow guidelines for personal protective equipment (PPE), have good hand hygiene, cough or sneeze into their elbow or a tissue, and not come to work if they are sick or have been around someone who is sick
- where possible not provide care to lots of different people
- keep 1-metre apart from you where possible
- keep a record of the people they are in contact with, for contact tracing purposes.

Support workers who provide you with household management, such as cleaning, should:

- keep 1-metre apart from you where possible
- have good hand hygiene, cough or sneeze into their elbow or a tissue, and not come to work if they are sick or have been around someone who is sick
- keep a record of the people they are in contact with, for contact tracing purposes.

You should agree with the people you live with and your provider who should visit and how their health will be protected.

Choice in community living and supported living

If you receive support in your home, including personal cares or household management services such as cleaning, you should follow the rules above for 'home and community support services'.

If you receive support in a residential group home, you should follow the rules above for 'Community residential services and residential services provided under the High and Complex Framework'.

If you receive support to access activities, such as, going to your favourite café, or joining a club, your support worker should help you to access this in a safe way (i.e. maintain 1-metre distance from other people, good hygiene, limits of the numbers of people gathering). If it is not possible to do this safely, your support worker should help you to do things in a different way such as by phone or virtually.

Other services that are available (equipment, hearing and vision, behaviour support services, Disability and Information Advisory Services)

All equipment, housing and vehicle modifications can now go ahead if services can be done safely.

Hearing and vision services (including NZ Sign Language interpreters), rehabilitation therapies and child development services can also return to work if they can do so safely.

Behaviour support services can now provide at-home visits and residential provider visits, if they can do so safely. They will also continue to provide phone support from 8am – 8pm Monday to Friday on **0800 000 421**. You can find more information here: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-information-disabled-people-and-their-family-and-whanau/covid-19-getting-disability-support#explore>.

Disability and Information Advisory Services should now also be available if services can be done safely.

Some NASC appointments will also resume

Needs Assessment and Service Coordination (NASC) services will continue to work over the phone or virtually where possible. You may have a NASC appointment in person where it can be done so safely. Your NASC will let you know how they will contact you.