

WGANZ COVID-19 BULLETIN 17 April 2020

Workplace operations at COVID-19 alert levels

[New guidance](#) has been released about workplace activities at different alert levels. The information includes some frequently asked questions and examples of what each alert level might look like for different kinds of businesses.

New Zealand remains in Alert Level 4 and all New Zealanders should continue to stay home to save lives. Only businesses that are essential can operate from their business premises during Alert Level 4.

The decision on whether to move New Zealand's alert level will be made on Monday 20 April.

The new guidance provides high-level details on what workplace activities are permitted at different alert levels. This includes:

- Guidelines for all businesses
- Questions and answers for all businesses
- Questions and answers for retail and hospitality
- Questions and answers for services
- Questions and answers for employment matters
- How the guidance can be applied in different workplaces
- Workplace premises only accessed by staff
- Workplace premises accessed by the public or customers
- Workers going to customers or a third-party premises
- Workplaces with no premises

Guidelines for all businesses

To operate safely at all alert levels during the COVID-19 pandemic, businesses must comply with:

- settings for the current alert level (including public health measures), and
- any appropriate public health requirements for their workplace (e.g. physical distancing), and
- all other health and safety obligations.

At all alert levels, businesses need to meet all public health guidelines. These include the following, although they may change over time:

- Regular disinfecting of surfaces.
- Encouraging good hand hygiene by allowing frequent hand washing and sanitising.
- Not having sick people in the workplace.
- Meeting physical distancing requirements.

Businesses should carefully consider how to safely operate at each alert level based on their individual circumstances. [WorkSafe](#) has created guidance about safe working during this pandemic (external link). The [Ministry of Health](#) also has specific infectious disease control advice for workplaces (external link). Industry organisations will also be issuing specific guidance for certain sectors and kinds of workplaces. If in doubt, you can contact WorkSafe, your industry organisation or your local chamber of commerce or BusinessNZ.

Alert Level 4

At Alert Level 4, people must work from home unless that is not possible. Only essential work can be done from business premises if it cannot be done from home. It is possible for some business models to operate at Alert Level 4 even if doing non-essential work, e.g. providing online legal advice or online guitar lessons.

Alert Level 3

At Alert Level 3, everyone must still work from home unless that is not possible. Workplaces can be reopened if the work cannot be done from home and the workplace can operate consistently with public health guidance. However, there cannot be contact with the public. For example, retail needs to be by contactless purchase and delivery, including drive-through and click and collect. Retail storefronts cannot open to customers (except supermarkets, dairies and petrol stations).

Alert Level 2

At Alert Level 2, businesses are encouraged to use alternative ways of working where possible. The aim is to reduce levels of people movement and interaction. For example, a business could use staggered shifts to reduce the amount of interpersonal interaction between workers on premises.

This bulletin is brought to you by Advicewise People - 0800 692 384. If you have any questions or would like to discuss the bulletin above, please call Philip or Anthony.
