

Main resources used:

COVID-19 Alert System < <https://covid19.govt.nz/government-actions/covid-19-alert-system/>>

Current COVID-19 alert level < <https://covid19.govt.nz/government-actions/covid-19-alert-level/>>

What is the COVID-19 four-level alert system?

On 21 March 2020, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern addressed parliament with the announcement of a four-tier alert system. This system is primarily to outline the status of the COVID-19 spread in New Zealand and the accompanying restrictions that apply to public health and social interaction.

The alert levels are particularly important for informing New Zealanders about the measures they should be taking around human interaction, business operation and travel and they can be applied nationwide, or to specific cities, regions or towns.

Level 1: Prepare

At level one the expectation is that the disease is contained. Some of the restrictions at this level include:

- Washing and drying hands, coughing into your elbow and touching your face as little as possible
- Border entry measures
- Cancellation of gatherings over 500
- Encouraged physical distancing
- Staying home if sick or experiencing flu-like symptoms – self isolate if appropriate

Level 2: Reduce

At level two the disease is still contained, but there is an increased risk of community transmission. Some further restrictions at this level include:

- Limiting non-essential travel
- Undertaking changes to work where possible, including remote working, shift-based working, staggering meal breaks
- Remaining at home if considered high risk (e.g. over 70 or pre-existing medical conditions)

Level 3: Restrict

At level three it is likely that the disease is not contained with events such as multiple clusters breaking out. Some further restrictions include:

- Limited travel in areas with outbreaks or clusters
- Cancellation of all mass gatherings
- Closure of public venues such as museums, cinemas and libraries
- Closure of some non-essential businesses
- Deferring of elective services and procedures in hospitals

Level 4: Eliminate

At level four it is highly likely that the disease is not contained and there are widespread outbreaks or sustained transmission. Some of the further restrictions at this level include:

- Instruction to stay at home
- Closure of educational facilities
- Closure of all businesses except [essential services](#) and lifeline utilities
- Severe limitation of travel
- Major reprioritisation of healthcare services

For the official infographic outlining the alert system categories, please see here:

https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/COVID_Alert-levels_v2.pdf

And for other information on the current alert situation, please see guidance on the COVID-19 government website: <https://covid19.govt.nz/government-actions/covid-19-alert-level/>