

Auckland moves to alert level 2, the rest of NZ moves to alert level 1

Auckland moved to Alert Level 2 at 11:59pm on Wednesday 17 February. The rest of New Zealand moved to Alert Level 1 at the same time. This move follows an emergency cabinet meeting on the afternoon of Wednesday 17 February to discuss the latest community cases. Alert Levels will be reviewed again by Cabinet on Monday 22 February.

"I want to stress this is good news," Ardern says.

Papatoetoe High School students and their families are being asked to stay at home while the rest of Auckland's schools will be allowed to open. Ardern says if people are sick, they should stay home.

"There is every chance we will find further cases," she says.

The alert level 3 lockdown was necessary, Ardern adds, and they "absolutely" stand by that decision.

She says they weren't clear on the origin of that case, and "going hard" is much better than getting it wrong. She asks Aucklanders to keep to the rules so they can have the assurance they can move down alert levels later.

As an additional precautionary measure, the Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern announced that a new Public Health Order was to be introduced requiring face coverings to be worn on public transport throughout all of New Zealand at Alert Levels 1 and 2. [COVID-19 Public Health Response \(Alert Level Requirements\) Order \(No 2\) 2021](#) applies from 11:59pm 17 February 2021, until further notice. This will be reviewed by Cabinet on Monday 22 February.

At Alert Level 1, face coverings legally must be worn:

- on all public transport to, from and through New Zealand — including on long-distance bus and train journeys, as well as ferries
- on domestic flights throughout New Zealand
- by taxi and ride-share drivers — while it's not compulsory for passengers to wear them, we strongly encourage you to.

Key information for Alert Level 2:

- If you have any symptoms of COVID-19 or are unwell, stay home and get in contact with your doctor or Healthline.
- Gatherings and events must be less than 100 people and physical distance should be maintained from others when in public – two metres in public and retail stores and one metre in workplaces, cafes, restaurants and gyms.
- Mask use is highly encouraged.

See the Government's Unite Against COVID-19 site for more information.

Alert Level 2: <https://covid19.govt.nz/covid-19/restrictions/alert-level-2/>

Alert Level 1: <https://covid19.govt.nz/alert-system/alert-level-1/>

Resources:

Auckland to go to Alert Level 2: <<https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/new-zealand/2021/02/covid-19-jacinda-ardern-dr-ashley-bloomfield-announce-alert-levels-to-shift-down.html>>

Wear a face covering: <<https://covid19.govt.nz/health-and-wellbeing/protect-yourself-and-others/wear-a-face-covering/>>

COVID-19 Public Health Response (Alert Level Requirements) Order (No 2) 2021:
<<https://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2021/0007/latest/LMS453805.html>>