



ALERT LEVEL 1: COVID-19 Guidance for Transport Operators

Last updated: 0920 hrs, 20 November 2020

1. This guidance is applicable to operators for the provision of all transport services, including public transport, aviation, maritime and other land-based passenger services. To the extent that it is relevant, it may also be used by organisations transporting passengers without hire or reward.
2. It is intended to be read in conjunction with official information about COVID19 Alert Level 1 contained on, or linked from, the [covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz) webpage and on the [Ministry of Transport website](https://www.mot.govt.nz).
3. **Since this guidance was last published** (at 1140 hrs on 17 November 2020):
 - the Director-General of Health has clarified, by way of exemption that: drivers and passengers on school transport services are not required to wear a face covering, and school transport services are not required to display a QR code;
 - this guidance has been updated to: reflect the exemption issued by the Director-General of Health, include messaging on using a face covering safely, and incorporate some minor and technical changes.

Key points

- Possible community transmission is under investigation in Auckland. New Zealand remains at Alert Level 1.
- At Alert Level 1 individuals are not required to maintain physical distancing on-board public transport services, but passengers are still encouraged to keep their distance from others where possible.
- Until further notice, and with some exemptions, face coverings must be worn on:
 - all domestic air transport services, operated for hire or reward, and available to the public generally;
 - public transport services that travel within, from, to, or through Auckland.
- However:
 - passengers of small passenger vehicle services, do not need to wear face coverings - but drivers of these services must wear a face covering (unless an exemption applies e.g. medical reasons, or safety reasons etc.).
 - face coverings are not required to be worn on school transport services.
- Face coverings are not required to be worn on public transport services that begin and end their journey outside of Auckland, and do not travel through Auckland (unless they are domestic air transport services). However, the Ministry of Health encourages people to wear face coverings, where practicable, on these services.
- Operators are required to support contact tracing, and most transport operators are required to display QR codes (compatible with the NZ COVID Tracer App). Public transport services that require passengers to provide their name and a contact phone number (to use the service) do not need to display QR codes; school transport services also do not need to display a QR code.

- Operators should continue to clean vehicles, vessels, aircraft and facilities (e.g. terminals) in line with Ministry of Health guidance.
- Operators are asked to continue with efforts to educate and encourage their passengers to travel safely, including: tracking their journey, practising physical distancing where possible, practising good hygiene including washing their hands regularly; and staying home if they are unwell.
- With regards to workplace health and safety, operators should consider advice and guidance from WorkSafe and the Ministry of Health.
- Transport operators are not expected, or required, to enforce passenger compliance with the Order or Ministry of Health guidelines; but may provide advice to passengers for travelling safely for example by displaying public information posters. Passengers and staff should not be encouraged to call Police if someone is not complying with the requirements. As per normal procedures, if the situation is dangerous or a passenger is displaying threatening behaviour, for example, Police should be called.

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4. Possible community transmission is under investigation in Auckland. New Zealand remains at Alert Level 1.
5. Travel is still be permitted between Auckland and the rest of New Zealand, but face covering requirements apply.
6. Until further notice, and with some exemptions, face coverings must be worn on:
 - all domestic air transport services, operated for hire or reward, and available to the public generally; and
 - public transport services that:
 - begin and end their journey within Auckland;
 - depart Auckland, and end their journey outside of Auckland;
 - depart outside of Auckland, and end their journey in Auckland;
 - depart and end their journey outside of Auckland, but travel through Auckland.
7. Face coverings will not be required to be worn on public transport services that begin and end their journey outside of Auckland, and do not travel through Auckland (unless they are domestic air transport services). However, the Ministry of Health encourages people to wear face coverings, where practicable, on these services.

Advice for traveling safely under Alert Level 1

8. We all need to remain vigilant in the battle against COVID-19. We advise travellers:
 - To be kind and patient with each other and transport staff, especially their driver or crew.
 - To practice good hygiene and follow Ministry of Health advice. This includes washing your hands thoroughly with soap and water and drying them (or using hand sanitiser if soap and water is not available); coughing and sneezing into your elbow; and not touching your face.

- To stay home if you're unwell, or may have COVID-19. You should also not travel if you: have been requested to self-isolate/quarantine, have symptoms of COVID-19, or are awaiting COVID-19 test results.
 - Where it is possible to do so, to keep your distance from others
 - That you must wear a face covering while on:
 - domestic flights across New Zealand, and
 - public transport services travelling within, from, to, or through Auckland. You are encouraged to wear a face covering on other public transport services outside of Auckland.
 - When wearing a face covering to follow Ministry of Health advice on: how to safely wear face covering, and how to safely dispose of a face covering (or clean a reusable face covering).
 - To keep a record of where you go and your interactions on the NZ COVID Tracer App; including scanning QR codes (where available), or manually recording travel information in the NZ COVID Tracer App (where QR codes are not available); OR keep a manual record if you do not have a smartphone.
 - To plan ahead, and allow extra time to ensure your journey is as comfortable as possible.
9. We recommend operators encourage their passengers and users to follow the safe travel tips (list above) and by publically displaying COVID-19 educational posters on site, and through social media and public announcements (e.g. in terminals and on-board).

About this guidance

10. This guidance outlines key information for transport service operators under Alert Levels 1. Specifically, the following matters are covered:

Section 1: Workplace health and safety

Section 2: Physical distancing

Section 3: Face coverings

Section 4: Supporting contact tracing efforts

Section 5: Cleaning practices

Section 6: Customer compliance

11. If you require further information or advice, please email the Ministry of Transport at: essentialtransport@transport.govt.nz.
12. If you would like access to collateral, including posters for your transport assets (e.g. buses, trains) or facility (e.g. terminals, platforms), please email the Ministry of Transport at: essentialtransport@transport.govt.nz.

Section 1: Workplace health and safety

13. When considering workplace health and safety arrangements, transport operators should consider:

- any advice or guidance issued by WorkSafe <https://worksafe.govt.nz/managing-health-and-safety/novel-coronavirus-covid/>
- advice or guidance issue by the Ministry of Health <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus> (where this may be relevant to their health and safety arrangements).

Section 2: Physical distancing

Public transport services

14. Physical distancing is not required to be observed on board public transport services at Alert Level 1; however, passengers are still encouraged to physically distance where possible.
15. Regional authorities (in the case of public transport) and transport operators should continue public messaging that discourages people who are unwell from using their services.

Airports, bus and train stations, and ferry terminals

16. Physical distancing is not required to be observed at Alert Level 1; however, passengers are still encouraged to physically distance where possible.

Section 3: Face coverings

On what air transport and public transport services do face coverings have to be worn?

17. Please see the table below for the services that face coverings must be worn on:

Type of Journey	Face covering required?	Examples
An air transport service, domestic air transport services, operated for hire or reward, and available to the public generally	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A flight between Great Barrier Island and Auckland Airport (a flight within the Auckland area).• A domestic flight from Auckland to Christchurch (a flight from Auckland, to an area outside of Auckland).• A domestic flight from Christchurch to Auckland (a flight from an area outside of Auckland, to Auckland).• A domestic flight from Wellington to Christchurch (a flight between two areas, outside of the Auckland area).
A public transport service that begins and ends its journey within Auckland	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A train service between Britomart and Papakura.• A bus service between Britomart and Albany.• A ferry service between Waiheke Island and

		Auckland CBD.
A public transport service that departs Auckland, and ends its journey outside of Auckland.	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An interregional bus or train service from Auckland to Wellington,
An air transport, or public transport, service that departs outside of Auckland, and ends its journey in Auckland	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An interregional bus or train service from Wellington to Auckland, A domestic flight from Christchurch to Auckland.
A public transport service that departs and ends its journey outside of Auckland but travels through Auckland.	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An interregional bus service from Hamilton to Whangarei.
A public transport service (other than an air transport service) that begins and ends its journey outside of Auckland and does not travel through Auckland.	No (but encouraged where practicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Cook Strait ferry sailing. A bus or train service within the Wellington Region. A train service between Wellington and Palmerston North. A bus service between Wellington and Hamilton.
A public transport service (other than an air transport service) that begins and ends its journey outside of Auckland, and does not travel through Auckland; <i>but a passenger has a connecting service to a service that departs from, or arrives in, Auckland.</i>	No (but encouraged where practicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A bus service between Wellington and Hamilton, where the passenger has a connecting service between Hamilton and Auckland (note: a face covering must be worn on the service between Hamilton and Auckland).

18. However, there are some exemptions (to the face covering requirements in the table above):

- passengers of small passenger services are not required to wear a face covering - but drivers of those services are on journeys within, from, to, or through, Auckland; and
- drivers and passengers of school transport services (meaning dedicated school services contracted by: the Ministry of Education, or Local Authority, or School Board, or Auckland Transport) are not required to wear a face covering; and
- charter services and tours.

19. Face coverings will not be required to be worn on public transport services that begin and end their journey outside of Auckland and **do not** travel through Auckland (unless they are air transport services). However, the Ministry of Health encourages people to wear face coverings, where practicable, on these services.

What kind of face covering can be used, and how should it be worn?

20. Any face covering that adequately covers the mouth and nostrils can be used, these include: single use disposable masks, washable reusable masks (whether purchased or homemade), or other types of face coverings (e.g. a scarf wrapped around the face).
21. The Ministry of Health has issued advice on: how to safely wear face covering, and how to safely dispose of a face covering (or clean a reusable face covering); please see this [link](#).

Who needs to wear a face covering?

22. In general, drivers, staff, and passengers on applicable air transport, and public transport, services are required to wear face coverings. However, there are specific exemptions for certain people and situations. These are outlined below.

Is anybody exempt from wearing a face covering?

23. Yes. Transport operators should be aware that the following persons are not required to wear face coverings:
 - persons under the age of 12, and
 - persons who have a medical condition or disability that make it unsuitable to wear a face covering (*please note it might not always be clear why someone may need to be exempt from wearing a face covering*); and
 - drivers or staff, if:
 - they are in a space completely separated from passengers (e.g. pilots in a cockpit, or train drivers in a train cab), or
 - wearing a face covering could make it unsafe to operate the vehicle (e.g. wearing a face covering means drivers or staff are unable to properly communicate, or causes the eyeglasses of the driver to fog).
24. In addition, transport operators should note that the use of face coverings are not required in the following situations:
 - if it is unsafe to wear a face covering (e.g. if the person's only face covering is wet, or wearing a face covering means a driver cannot safely operate the vehicle),
 - if there is an emergency that requires the face covering to be removed (e.g. to perform CPR),
 - if removal of the face covering is required to prove identity,
 - to take medicine,
 - to eat or drink (if eating or drinking is permitted by the conditions of carriage on the relevant service),

- if visibility of the mouth is required for communication (e.g. when communicating with someone who is deaf),
- if there is a legal requirement to remove, or not to wear, the face covering,
- if there is a reasonable excuse not to wear a face covering.

25. Information from the Ministry of Health, regarding the use of face coverings in the community, is available [here](#).

What about enforcement?

26. The obligation to wear a face covering on public transport is the responsibility of the individual.
27. Operators, drivers and staff are not expected to enforce the rules; but they still have their usual customer relations role to remind people about the requirements regarding face coverings. The role is to educate and encourage passengers to do the right thing, but not to enforce the requirements.
28. Staff are not expected to refuse boarding to people who do not have a face covering. This kind of issue should be dealt with as you would normally manage a difficult passenger situation.
29. Passengers and staff should not be encouraged to call Police if someone is not wearing a face covering. As per normal procedures, if the situation is dangerous or a passenger is displaying threatening behaviour, for example, Police should be called.

Should operators be encouraging and educating passengers about wearing face coverings?

30. Yes, the support of operators and staff in encouraging and educating passengers about the wearing of face coverings is appreciated. A range of collateral is provided with this guidance including posters which operators are asked to display across their fleets, terminals, stations and other facilities. A script to support social media messaging and PA announcements is attached at Appendix 1 to this guidance.
31. The government will continue to remind people to follow the instructions of the public transport workforce regarding face coverings.
32. These messages will be reinforced through All of Government public communications.

Section 4: Supporting contact tracing

What is contact tracing and why is it important?

33. The purpose of contact tracing is to prevent potential onward transmission, raise awareness about the disease and its symptoms and support early detection of suspected cases.
34. It is important that everyone undertakes practicable actions to support a quick and robust contact tracing process. Contact tracing (coupled with testing and quarantine/isolation measures) is a critical pillar in supporting New Zealand's goal to eliminate COVID-19.

Who undertakes contact tracing?

35. Contact tracing is undertaken by Public Health Units (in the DHB where the confirmed, or probable case was diagnosed), or by the Ministry of Health's National Close Contact Service.
36. When there is a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19, a contact tracing process will occur to:
 - identify all 'close contacts' of the confirmed or probable case – so that these people can be quarantined/isolated (and tested if required); and
 - identify 'casual contacts', of the confirmed or probable case, and ask them to get tested if they have (or develop) symptoms of COVID-19.

What's the difference between a close contact and a casual contact?

37. Generally, a 'close contact' is someone who has been within 2 metres for more than 15 minutes of a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19. The full definition of 'close contact' is available on page 13 of this factsheet: <https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/pages/advice-for-health-professionals-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-27aug2020.pdf>
38. A 'casual contact' is someone who may have been in contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19, but more than 2m apart or for less 15 minutes.

What should regional authorities and transport operators do to support contact tracing?

39. Under Alert Levels 1 and 2, transport operators are required to support contact tracing.
40. Regional authorities, and transport operators, are required to display QR codes that are compatible with the NZ COVID Tracer App for their transport assets. Those QR codes need to be displayed in an easily accessible prominent place.
41. Public transport services are not required to obtain and display QR codes if they require all passengers to provide their name and a contact telephone number (in order to use the service); these may include services, such as:
 - air passenger services,
 - interregional bus services,
 - interregional passenger train services.
42. In addition the following services do not need to obtain and display QR codes:
 - school transport services (meaning dedicated school services contracted by: the Ministry of Education, or Local Authority, or School Board, or Auckland Transport), or
 - car sharing services and carpooling services.
43. Regional authorities (in the case of public transport) and transport operators should also take steps to promote and enable users and passengers to keep records for contact tracing purposes. We recommend

transport operators issue public messaging (e.g. through posters, announcements, social media) to encourage users and passengers to:

- use the NZ COVID Tracer App by scanning the QR code (where display of the QR code is available), or recording the trip manually in the NZ COVID Tracer App (if the QR code is not available); OR keep a manual record if you do not have a smartphone.
- use public electronic ticketing cards where these are available (e.g. AT HOP, Snapper, Metrocard or Bee Card) and make sure those cards are registered with the passenger's contact information.

What can regional authorities and operators expect if there is a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 on their transport service?

44. If there is a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 on a transport service, a health official will notify the regional authority (in the case of public transport) and/or operator and request your support with identifying the contacts of that person. The health official will be particularly interested in details you might have of any people who were in 'close contact' with the COVID-19 case on the bus/train/ferry they are investigating.
45. For example, you may be asked to review CCTV footage, or online passenger registers (e.g. public transport electronic ticketing card registration details).
46. The health official may also ask you to provide any contact information you might have for people who were in 'casual contact' with the COVID-19 case on the bus/train/ferry/aircraft they are investigating. This is so they can ask these 'casual contacts' to get tested if they have (or develop) symptoms of COVID-19.
47. If you do not have this information (but are not certain that there were no 'close contacts') the health official will discuss with you what action should be taken. For example, they may request that you undertake public messaging asking people that travelled on the service to contact the COVID-19 Healthline.
48. If you are certain that there were no 'close contacts' (e.g. CCTV footage shows no 'close contacts' were established), then you should advise the health official of this and ask if there is anything more that you should do.

Section 5: Cleaning

49. Transport operators should apply cleaning practices consistent with Ministry of Health guidance.
 - Ministry of Health general guidance on cleaning can be found [here](#)
 - Ministry of Health cleaning FAQs can be found [here](#)
50. Cleaning regimes should include:
 - cleaning the vehicle/vessel/aircraft regularly with particular attention to high-touch surfaces (where possible, at the end of each shift/sailing/flight, but at least at the end of each day).
 - as far as practicable, frequent cleaning of high-touch surfaces throughout the day.

Section 6: Customer compliance

51. Transport operators are not expected, or required, to enforce passenger compliance with:
- the COVID-19 Public Health Response (Alert Level Requirements) Order 2020, or
 - Ministry of Health guidelines.
52. Transport operators, however, may choose to stop passengers boarding, where it is lawful to do so on health and safety grounds as per their standard operating procedures.
53. Transport operators may also provide advice to passengers for travelling safely for example by displaying public information posters.

Appendix 1: Public Announcement Scripts

Public Transport Operators – Bus / Train (for services travelling within, from, to, or through Auckland)

Face coverings help us protect ourselves and others from the spread of COVID-19.

You are required to wear a face covering on public transport when travelling within Auckland; or from, to, or through Auckland.

Everyone should wear a face covering while on the bus / train, unless you are under 12 years old, or have a health reason for not wearing one.

Your driver may not be wearing a face covering because of safety/medical reasons. Please be respectful.

We also encourage you to track your journey using the QR codes provided, or record it manually.

Please keep your face covering on until you exit the bus / train, and if you need to dispose of it, please do so safely.

If you are sick, please don't use public transport.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Ferry Operators (for services travelling within, from, to or through Auckland)

Face coverings help us protect ourselves and others from the spread of COVID-19.

You are required to wear a face covering on public transport when travelling within Auckland; or from, to, or through Auckland.

Everyone should wear a face covering while on the ferry, unless you are under 12 years old, or have a health reason for not wearing one.

Your captain or crew may not be wearing a face covering because of safety/medical reasons. Please be respectful.

We also encourage you to track your journey using the QR codes provided, or record it manually.

Please keep your face covering on until you exit the ferry, and if you need to dispose of it, please do so safely.

If you are sick, please don't use public transport.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Airlines / Airports

Face coverings help us protect ourselves and others from the spread of COVID-19.

You are required to wear a face covering while on board the aircraft and until you enter the terminal.

Everyone should wear a face covering while on the aircraft, unless you are under 12 years old, or have a health reason for not wearing one.

Your pilot or members of the cabin crew may not be wearing a face covering for safety reasons. Please be respectful.

Please keep your face covering on until you enter the terminal, and if you need to dispose of it, please do so safely.

If you are sick, please don't fly.

Thanks for your cooperation.
