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# Ardern, 2020c

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COVID-19 timeline  
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## Nation steps up to COVID-19 Alert Level 2



RT HON JACINDA ARDERN(/MINISTER/RT-HON-JACINDA-ARDERN)

Prime Minister (/portfolio/labour-led-government-2017-2020/prime-minister)

- Four stage Alert System for COVID-19 announced
- New Zealand moved up to COVID-19 Alert Level 2 – Reduce Contact
- New Zealanders over 70 and those with certain medical conditions told to stay at home as much as they can to reduce risk of contact with the virus
- Workplaces to implement plans to reduce person-to-person contact, including work from home where possible
- Limit all non-essential domestic travel

New Zealand has been moved up to COVID-19 Alert Level 2, Reduce Contact, in an escalation of efforts to reduce the spread of the virus in New Zealand, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern announced today.

“Protecting New Zealanders from the virus is our number one objective, and we must take decisive action to prevent the worst occurring here,” Jacinda Ardern said.

“New Zealand is fighting an unprecedented global pandemic. We must fight by going hard and going early with new measures to slow the transmission of the virus.

“Today I am announcing a four stage COVID-19 Alert Level system, with escalating restrictions on human contact, travel and business operations.

“The international situation is changing rapidly and we need to clearly sign-post the changes New Zealanders will be asked to make as we step up our efforts to limit the spread of the virus. The alert system means people can see and plan for the kinds of restrictions we may be required to put in place, may be required rapidly.

“Based on expert medical advice and international evidence I am moving New Zealand to Alert Level 2, Reduce Contact. This will have a significant disruption on how we go about our daily lives, but it is necessary to protect lives.

“People over 70 years of age, or people who are immunocompromised or have certain pre-existing conditions, need to stay at home as much as they can from now on.

“I’m asking everyone to support our older New Zealanders by doing things like keeping in contact with them and dropping off food or other supplies.

“I am also asking businesses and workplaces to play their part. Many workplaces already have plans for staff to work from home or to distance themselves in the workplace. We are now asking you to put those plans in place.

“Health and emergency professionals, transport and delivery staff, supermarket and food production workers, and other essential people will be continuing on at their place of work at this alert level.

“It’s also important to note that at every alert level supermarkets around New Zealand will remain open.

“We are also asking New Zealanders to limit all non-essential domestic travel. We need people to significantly reduce the number of interactions they have at this time and that includes visiting people in different parts of the country for non-essential reasons.

“These measures are being taken in the national interest. We know people, business, and sports events will be impacted, but these are short-term disruptions for the overall health of our people and country.

“I know many New Zealanders are anxious. The alert system is designed to offer certainty around future action and the ability for people to plan and prepare for any future eventuality. Please be strong, be kind, and unite against COVID-19,” Jacinda Ardern said.

Further details available at [www.covid19.govt.nz](http://www.covid19.govt.nz) (<http://www.covid19.govt.nz/>)



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