COVID-19: Epidemic notice and Orders

Information on the Epidemic notice and Orders issued by the Government to manage specific matters during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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COVID-19 Public Health Response Act 2020

The COVID-19 Public Health Response Act 2020 was passed as standalone legislation to provide a different legal framework for responding to COVID-19. The Act allows the Minister of Health (or the Director-General of Health in specified circumstances) to make orders under section 11 to give effect to the public health response to COVID-19 in New Zealand.

- COVID-19 Public Health Response Act 2020

COVID-19 Public Health Response (Alert Levels 3 and 2) Order 2020
The COVID-19 Public Health Response (Alert Levels 3 and 2) Order 2020 came into force at 11.59 pm on 22 August 2020. This Order outlines the Alert Level 3 restrictions in place for the Auckland region, and Alert Level 2 restrictions for all other regions of New Zealand. The Order also prohibits travel into the Auckland region except in specific circumstances.

- **COVID-19 Public Health Response (Alert Levels 3 and 2) Order 2020**  

**Exemptions Granted under the COVID-19 Public Health Response (Alert Levels 3 and 2) Order 2020**

The COVID-19 Public Health Response (Alert Levels 3 and 2) Order 2020 allows the Director-General of Health to grant exemptions (at clause 27) from the application of any provision or requirement of the Order.

The following exemptions have been granted:

- **NZ Steel** (https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2020-g03684)
- **Air NZ and Jetstar** (https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2020-g03679)
- **Persons returning to their principle home or place of residence** (https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2020-gp3727)
- **Persons performing regulatory functions and persons providing services relating to critical infrastructure** (https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2020-gp3721)
- **Poultry production workers** (https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2020-gp3788)
- **MPI, horticulture, dairy processing etc** (https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2020-gp3789)
- **Large gazette -- construction, infrastructure etc** (https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2020-gp3791)
- **Education entities** (https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2020-gp3790)
- **Specific persons** (https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2020-gp3730)
- **Persons travelling to sentencing** (https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2020-gp3863?noticeNumber=2020-gp3863)
- **Countdown supermarkets** (https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2020-gp3864?noticeNumber=2020-gp3864)
- **Apiculture** (https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2020-gp3893)
- **George Weston Foods** (https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2020-gp3888)
- **Specialist veterinarians** (https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2020-gp3866)

**Authorisations of enforcement officers under the COVID-19 Public Health Response Act 2020**
The Director-General may authorise suitably qualified and trained individuals to carry out any functions and powers as enforcement officers under section 18 of the COVID-19 Public Health Response Act 2020. The Director-General has currently authorised three classes of persons as enforcement officers. Those classes of people are:

1. WorkSafe inspectors
2. Aviation Security officers
3. Customs officers.

The authorisations describe the class of people that are authorised as enforcement officers, the powers (available under the COVID-19 Public Health Response Act) that they may exercise, and the functions which they may carry out:

- Authorisation of WorkSafe inspectors – 12 August 2020 (Word, 439 KB)
- Authorisation of WorkSafe inspectors – 12 August 2020 (PDF, 142 KB)
- Authorisation of Aviation Security officers – 13 July 2020 (Word, 440 KB)
- Authorisation of Aviation Security officers – 13 July 2020 (PDF, 142 KB)
- Authorisation of Customs officers – 13 July 2020 (Word, 440 KB)
- Authorisation of Customs officers – 13 July 2020 (PDF, 144 KB)

**Epidemic Notice**

On Monday 23 March, the Prime Minister issued an Epidemic Notice under section 5 of the Epidemic Preparedness Act 2006. This was based on advice received from the Director-General of Health in response to the increasingly complex and far-reaching response to COVID-19.

On 23 June 2020, the Prime Minister renewed the Epidemic Notice pursuant to section 7 of the Epidemic Preparedness Act 2006.

**What is an Epidemic Notice?**
This Government has chosen to go hard and go early in the response to COVID-19 for public health reasons. The package of measures introduced since 14 March have helped New Zealand take a precautionary approach to managing COVID-19.

An Epidemic Notice is a public policy tool to help Government agencies respond swiftly and effectively in a rapidly evolving situation. An epidemic notice enables the use of a number of ‘special powers’ in legislation.

In particular, it will allow for the extension of people currently in New Zealand on temporary visas that will expire between 1 April 2020 and the end of the Epidemic Notice. See the section below for more details.

More special powers may be used as the situation progresses and this page will be updated when they are.

- Gazette Notice pursuant to section 5 of the Epidemic Preparedness Act 2006
  (https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2020-go1368)
- Gazette Notice pursuant to section 8 of the Epidemic Preparedness Act 2006
  (https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2020-go1369)
- Gazette Notice pursuant to section 7 of the Epidemic Preparedness Act 2006
  (https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2020-go2681)

**Duration of the Epidemic Notice**

The Notice lasts for three months from 23 June 2020 unless the Government chooses to lift it earlier.

The Notice can be extended again if required.

**Border Orders**


A new health order came into force at 11.59 pm 14 August requiring those who work at Managed Isolation and Quarantine Facilities, at Ports of Auckland and Port of Tauranga, to be tested for COVID-19 by Monday 11.59 pm 17 August.

An amendment to the Order was put in place on 17 August, to:
• specify more precisely that only higher-risk workers at Ports of Auckland and Port of Tauranga are required to be tested
• extend the deadline for testing affected workers by three days, to Thursday 11.59 pm, 20 August
• extend the time period of exemption from further testing if a test has already been done from 12 pm 12 August to 12 am 12 August 2020.

Testing is part of our rapid response to detect any cases and contain the outbreak of COVID-19, and to protect the health of workers, their families and whānau and the broader community.

This amendment means that we focus testing those at ports who are considered to be higher risk first, and by doing so quickly detect any cases.

It’s important that we use legal measures such as this with discretion and in proportion to the risk level. This Order applies to those people where it is considered there is greater risk, but noting that it is still important that all those who work at the border and who are not affected by this order get a test and this remains voluntary.

• COVID-19 Public Health Response (COVID-19 Testing) Order 2020
• COVID-19 Public Health Response (COVID-19 Testing) Order 2020 Amendment

Maritime Border Order

The Maritime Border Order 2020 came into effect at 11.59 pm on Tuesday 30 June 2020.

The Border Order will be reviewed after four weeks initially and will then be refined based on our experience, international best practice and feedback from the maritime sector.

As trade and other international maritime activities resume, stricter rules are needed to strengthen New Zealand’s maritime border and prevent COVID-19 from entering our country.

The new Maritime Border Order provides clear and consistent rules for safe crew changes and the safe movement of cargo to and from New Zealand.

These rules set the standards for what vessels and people must do if they are eligible to and wish to cross New Zealand's maritime border.

• COVID-19 Public Health Response (Maritime Border) Order 2020
Air Border Order

The new Air Border Order came into effect at 11.59 pm on Monday 22 June 2020, following the expiry of the original order on 22 June.

It continues to require passengers who have flown into New Zealand to be quarantined or isolated at a managed facility for 14 days.

The new Air Border Order further strengthens the management of public health risk at the border to prevent transmission of COVID-19 into our communities.

- COVID-19 Public Health Response (Air Border) Order 2020

An amendment was made to this Order to transfer responsibility for the management of Managed Isolation Facilities from the Director General of Health to the Chief Executive of MBIE, and where appropriate, to require the Chief Executive of MBIE to take into account advice from a Medical Officer of Health when making decisions. This amendment order comes into effect at 11.59pm on 13 July 2020.

Health Act Orders

There have been several orders produced under the Health Act1956 for New Zealand’s COVID-19 response. These have now been revoked or replaced by orders made under COVID-19 Public Health Response Act 2020.

For further information about the previous Orders see Parliamentary Council Office COVID-19 legislation (http://www.eco.govt.nz/covid-19-legislation/).

Temporary visa holders

The New Zealand Government has issued an epidemic management notice and further strengthened travel restrictions, closing our border to almost all travellers from 23:59 on Thursday 19 March 2020 (New Zealand time).
Travellers with a temporary (work, student, visitor, interim and limited) visa expiring before 1 April 2020 who are unable to leave New Zealand must apply online for a new visa. An interim visa will be issued.

Travellers with a temporary visa due to expire between 1 April and 9 July 2020 will have their visas extended to late September. Confirmation of extensions will be emailed to all visa holders.


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