COVID-19 Timeline
Tracking key events in NZ and international milestones

May 2020
→ June 2020 → July 2020

2019 ⇒

Coronavirus
COVID-19

December 2019
• 1 December: Cases of unknown pneumonia surface in Wuhan, China
• 31 December: (International) New virus reported to World Health Organisation

2020 ⇒
January 2020

- 15 January (International) First case reported outside of China (Thailand)
- 24 January (International) Cases reported in Malaysia, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, Canada, France, and the United States confirmed to be transmissible
- 25 January (International) First three cases confirmed in Australia
- 28 January Ministry of Health sets up National Health Coordination Centre (NHCC)
- 30 January Infectious & Notifiable Diseases Order issued, requiring health practitioners to report any suspected cases

February 2020

- 3 February Government announces that foreign travellers who left from China would be denied entry to New Zealand, with only New Zealand citizens and permanent residents and their family being allowed to enter. Foreigners who left China and spent at least 14 days in another country are permitted to enter New Zealand.
- 7 February Ministry of Health set up a dedicated Healthline freephone number for COVID-19 related calls.
- 8 February 2 New Zealanders aboard the cruise ship Diamond Princess in Japan are confirmed to have the virus
- 11 February (International) WHO names the new disease COVID-19, short for coronavirus disease 2019 (International) Total deaths exceed that of the SARS outbreak of 2002-2004
- 17 February (International) First person outside of Asia dies (Chinese tourist in France)
- 24 February Ban on foreign travellers who left from China extended by eight days
- 28 February First confirmed case in New Zealand extends travel restrictions to include travellers from Iran
March 2020

- **2 March** Government announces any person who has visited northern Italy or South Korea must self-isolate for 14 days.
- **4-7 March** Second, third, fourth, and fifth cases confirmed (daily increases from there), including first person-to-person transmission in New Zealand.
- **10 March** (International) Italy goes on national lockdown.
- **11 March** (International) WHO declares an official global pandemic.
- **12 March** (International) United States suspends travel from Europe.
- **14 March** New Zealand starts announcing new cases daily, and that anyone arriving in the country must self-isolate for 14 days (save those from the Pacific).
- **16 March** Prime Minister announces that any tourists that don’t self-isolate for 14 days will be deported.
  
  Air New Zealand halts share trading.

- **17 March** Reserve Bank announces emergency cut of the Official Cash rate.
  
  New Zealand Government announces $12.1 billion economic assistance package, including a $500 million boost for health, $8.7 billion in support for businesses and jobs, and $2.8 billion for income support.
- **18 March** 20 confirmed cases.
- **19 March** 28 confirmed cases.
  
  Indoor gatherings of more than 100 people are cancelled.

  Government closes the borders to everyone but citizens and permanent residents (first time in history).
- **20 March** 39 confirmed cases.
- **21 March** 52 confirmed cases.
  
  Prime Minister announces the new alert level system and that the country was moving to level 2.
- **22 March** 66 confirmed cases.
- **23 March** 102 confirmed cases (including first two cases of community transmission).
  
  Prime Minister announced country would, effective immediately (1:40pm) enter alert level 3, and that after Wednesday the country would go into alert level 4 for at a minimum 4 weeks.
- **24 March** 155 confirmed cases.
- **25 March** 205 confirmed and probable cases.
  
  Emergency declared at 12.21pm in Parliament.
  
  Alert level 4 at 11.59pm.
- **29 March** First NZ coronavirus-related death reported.

205 Cases
23,777 Tests
1 Death
April 2020

- 2-5 April NZ peak level of new cases reached (89)
- 3 April (International) One million cases recorded worldwide
  Minister announces changes to the Companies Act to help struggling businesses
- 5 April Ethnicity statistics are released on the cases
- 6 April (International) UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson hospitalised
- 7 April First time the number of active cases dropped (recoveries outnumbered new cases)
- 9 April Compulsory 2 week quarantine for New Zealanders arriving the country announced, to commence by end of the day
- 15 April (International) Two million cases recorded worldwide
- 13-15 April Death toll rose to 12
- 18 April (International) WHO releases data on cases by age and sex
- 20 April Prime Minister announced that the country would drop down to alert level 3 at 11.59pm on 27 April, and that the plan was to remain at level 3 for a minimum of 2 weeks, with a decision made on 11 May on whether to drop to level 2
- 27 April (International) Global death toll surpasses 200,000 and cases are expected to soon break 3 million

Country moves to alert level 3 at 11.59pm, 19 deaths.
May 2020

• 4 May First day in New Zealand where the reported new cases were 0 (this was repeated the follow day, May 5 (1))
• 9 May (International) Globally, the number of cases passes 4 million, with a death toll of 282,000. New Zealand’s death toll is at 21.
• 11 May The Prime Minister announces that a staggered move into Alert Level 2 will occur from 14 May
• 14 May New Zealand enters Alert Level 2 with no new cases (the same as on May 12 & 13) and deaths remaining at 21.

• 15 May (International) more than 4.75 million cases worldwide, more than 316,000 deaths, and more than 1.75 million have recovered.
• 17 May One new case of COVID-19 is reported in New Zealand, 45 active cases, with 1433 people having recovered and 21 deaths
• 22 May One new case of COVID-19 is reported in New Zealand
• 24 May New Zealand’s death toll rises to 22.
• 29 May 7 days in a row with no new cases in New Zealand, and one active case remaining

June 2020

• 3 June 12 days in a row with no new cases in New Zealand, one active case remaining

Globally, nearly 6 & a half million recorded cases has been reached, with nearly 400 thousand deaths associated with COVID-19

• 8 June The one active case in New Zealand is announced as having recovered, and with no new cases for 17 days, New Zealand is declared COVID-19 free.

The Prime Minister announces that Alert Level 1 (business, with closed international borders and contact tracing) will begin at midnight.

• 9 June Alert Level 1 begins in New Zealand.
• 16 June After 24 days with zero new cases, Health Minister David Clark suspends compassionate exemptions for quarantined travellers, after two women who had been granted such to leave quarantine early (to attend a funeral) test positive. In days following, further information about the two women emerges, leading the Prime Minister to describe the release as a “failure of the system”
COVID-19

July 2020

- 2 July Health Minister David Clark resigns from his portfolio, following criticism of his leadership and actions (Chris Hipkins takes over as interim Health Minister, and Megan Woods takes over responsibility for Border Management)
- 4 July An additional 2 postcodes and 9 public housing towers are added to the Melbourne lockdown
- 6 July 127 new cases reported in Melbourne. Victorian and NSW governments announce interstate border will close from 8 July.
- 7 July NZ Government asks Air NZ and Singapore Airlines to manage international bookings to ensure NZ managed isolation facilities are not overwhelmed. NZ announces over 5 thousand people were booked to travel back to NZ in the following three weeks
- 11 new cases reported in Melbourne, the Victorian Premier announces that the entirety of metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire would re-enter lockdown for a minimum of 6 weeks from 9 July.
- 12 July 25 active cases in New Zealand, all in managed isolation, no community transmission cases.
- 13 July Globally almost 13 million cases have been confirmed, with nearly 570,000 deaths. The US has over 3 million cases, with more than 135,000 deaths, and is the most affected country on Earth. Then follows Brazil, India, Russia, Peru, Chile, Mexico, and the United Kingdom.
- 15 July NZ Prime Minister releases government’s COVID-19 response framework in case of a community transmission outbreak in NZ, involving regional and localized lockdowns, based on similar plans in Victoria, NSW, Hong Kong, Singapore, and South Korea.
- 19 July Announcement that face-coverings are to be mandatory in Melbourne from July 22
- 23 July 403 new cases in 24 hours announced in Victoria, with a total of 7,125 active cases in the state
- 29 July NZ announcement made that some travellers entering New Zealand would have to pay for their 14-day managed isolation. Those impacted would be those who left NZ after the rules came into effect, those who intend to stay in NZ for less than 90 days, and must temporary visa holders (with some exceptions). Most New Zealanders returning home would remain exempt however.
- 30 July 723 new cases in 24 hours announced in Victoria, with a total of 3,998 active cases in the state

August 2020

- 3 August A state of disaster was declared in Victoria, including a curfew in Melbourne from 8pm to 5am. Victoria was to institute regional stage 3 restrictions, with Melbourne at stage 4.
- 4 August The number of active cases in New Zealand is 22 (all in managed isolation, arrivals from overseas)
- 5 August 725 new cases in 24 hours announced in Victoria, with a total of 13,035 active cases in the state

Data released from StatsNZ showed that in the June quarter labour market statistics for NZ, of the 11,000 people who were no longer in paid employment (employment fell 0.4%) 10,000 were women (91%).
• 9 August  New Zealand went 100 days with no community spread of COVID-19 (in other word, all cases in New Zealand are in managed isolation from border entries)
• 11 August  Four cases of community transmission are discovered in Auckland, all from the same family with no link to overseas travel or managed isolation/quarantine facilities

Prime Minister announces that as at midnight on Wednesday the 12th of August the entire Auckland region would be moving back to Alert Level 3 until midnight Friday the 11th, and the rest of the country would move back to Alert Level 2. This is the first deployment of a regional lockdown strategy.
• 12 August  At midnight the Auckland region goes back to Alert Level 3 lockdown, with the rest of the country at level 2.

Police set up nine checkpoints in and out of the Auckland region to monitor who is entering and leaving the city
• 13 August  13 new confirmed cases in New Zealand, 1 in managed isolation from an arrival from overseas, and 12 related to the family cluster announced on 11 August. All in Auckland.

15 testing centres are opened across Auckland, and testing centres have opened in Rotorua and Taupo (due to the family having travelled there on holiday).
• 14 August  13 new cases announced, of which 12 are confirmed, and 1 is probable. 2 of the new cases are in Tuhoroa, but related to the Auckland cluster.

The Prime Minister announces that the current Alert Level arrangement (Level 3 in Auckland, Level 2 for the rest of the country) will remain in place for another 12 days till 11.59pm on Wednesday the 26th of August, but that it will be reviewed on the 21st of August.

The Wage Subsidy Scheme will be extended to include this new period of lockdown at Level 3 (will be available to the whole county due to Auckland’s economic effect on the rest of the country), as will be the COVID Leave Scheme to assist those required to be in isolation as a result of testing.
• 15 August  7 new cases reported, all confirmed, all from the new cluster, bringing the total number of active cases to 56

In Victoria, Australia, there are 303 new cases overnight, bringing the total cumulative cases (active and not) for the state to 16,517 (and for the country 23,035, making Victoria 72% of all cases in Australia)
• 16 August  13 new cases in New Zealand, all confirmed, 12 from the new cluster and one in managed isolation at the border. The total active cases is 69.

(International) Worldwide there has officially been over 21 and a half million confirmed cases, over 7 million current active cases, and nearly 775,000 deaths.
• 17 August  The Prime Minister delays the New Zealand national election from September 19th to October 17th due to the level 3 lockdown in Auckland to allow extra time for campaigning, under urging from the opposition parties and New Zealand First.

9 new confirmed cases in New Zealand, all from the community cluster, total active cases are 78.
• 18 August  13 new cases reported in New Zealand, wherein 2 were cases of community transmission that had previously not been associated with the cluster, one was connected via genomic testing, and another was separately linked to a managed isolation hotel in Auckland.
• 19 August  Became compulsory for all businesses to display official government NZ COVID tracer QR codes at their doors.
• 24 August  NZ Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern announces that the regional Alert Level 3 lockdown for Auckland would be extended to 11.59pm on Sunday the 30th of August 2020. Further, once Alert Level 2 on Monday the 31st of August, Auckland would have a limit of 10 people for gatherings (50 for wakes and funerals)
• 26 August  It is announced, by Health Minister Chris Hipkins, that from 11.59pm on Thursday the 3rd of September, it would be compulsory for all public transport providers (including ride-share vehicles) to provide official government NZ COVID tracer QR codes for passengers.
• 27 August  Seven new cases confirmed (six from the known South Auckland cluster, one in managed isolation at the border), bringing active cases to 126.
• 30 August  Prime Minister Ardern confirmed that Auckland would enter into what she was calling 'Alert Level 2.5' at 11.59pm that night, ending the regional lockdown, with the rest of the country remaining at Alert Level 2.

The Prime Minister apologised for incorrect messaging on the government ‘United against COVID-19’ Facebook page which called on all people living in South Auckland to get tested (only symptomatic people and those in higher risk spaces or occupations)
• 31 August  Nine new confirmed cases reported and 15 recoveries, bringing total active cases to 131

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September 2020

• 1 September  Internationally, global cases total over 25 million, with over 800,000 deaths. The WHO announces that the Region of the Americas accounts for nearly half of all new cases from the previous week
• 4 September NZ Prime Minister announces that New Zealand would remain on Alert Level 2, with Auckland at the colloquially known 'Level 2.5' till at least 11.59pm on the 16th of September. A decision on whether it should be extended will be made on the 14th of September.

The 23rd person to die of COVID-19 in New Zealand is reported.

• 5 September Overnight the 24th person to die of COVID-19 in New Zealand is reported, former Cook Islands Prime Minister Joe Williams.

• 7 September In Victoria, there are 1,718 active cases, with 41 new cases and 9 lives lost in the previous 24 hours, bringing the total cases for the state to 19,534.

• 8 September Six new confirmed cases in NZ over the prior 24 hours, bringing the total to 1,782, with 123 active cases. All active cases are either at the border or related to the Auckland August cluster, no other community transmission reported.

• 10 September There are now 45 cases associated with a sub-cluster of the South Auckland cluster at the Mt Roskill Evangelical Fellowship church. Over 80% of the church have been tested.

• 14 September Announced that 89 people were close contacts with someone that had attended a gym before being tested positive for COVID-19, all these people were advised to self-isolate for 2 weeks.

The New Zealand Government extended the Alert Level 2.5 setting for Auckland (and Level 2 for the rest of the country) for one more week, with an announcement to come on September 21st, though social distancing requirements were relaxed on public transport and planes. Deputy Prime Minister Winston Peters disagreed with the decision to extend.

• 15 September 30 people entered self-isolation after a household contact of a staff member at Auckland Prison tested positive for COVID-19.

• 16 September The 25th person to die of COVID-19 in New Zealand is reported.

The global number of cases of the virus approaches 30 million.

• 19 September First new community-transmission case (one case) since 14 September is reported. All new cases since that date had been at the border.

• 20 September There are 71 active cases in New Zealand, including one new case from a man after he was released from a two-week mandatory quarantine at an isolation hotel, and giving two negative tests.

• 21 September No new cases reported in New Zealand.

The New Zealand Prime Minister announces as at 11.59pm that evening, the country (except for Auckland) would be dropping to Alert Level 1. Auckland would be waiting till 11.59pm on Wednesday the 23rd, when the city would drop from 2.5 to Alert Level 2. A review of that alert level for Auckland would be undertaken on October 5th.

• 23 September Six historic cases are reported in the Waikato, exposed by a family member visiting from Italy. This person is now classified as New Zealand’s earliest case of COVID-19, as they reported feeling symptoms from 21 February, and the previous earliest case was reported on the 28th of February.

• 24 September Auckland moves to Alert Level 2.

• 25 September Two new cases reported, one at the border, the other of community transmission.

• 27 September The number of active cases in hospital in New Zealand drops to 1.

• 29 September No new cases of community transmission in New Zealand, the total number is 1,835 (recovered 1,755, active cases 55, with 25 deaths).

International: the world-wide COVID-19 death toll surpasses one million

Unite against COVID-19

New Zealand Government

NZ Data as of 29 September 2020

29 September 2020

Number of confirmed cases in New Zealand: 1,835
Recovered: 1,755
Active cases: 55
Deaths

29 September 2020

Number of confirmed cases in New Zealand: 1,835
Border cases: 166
Active cases in MI & C: 29

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Cumulative confirmed and probable cases

Daily confirmed and probable cases
Total tests to date for COVID-19

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