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**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

23 August 2021

Keeping you updated COVID-19 (novel coronavirus)

Kia ora koutou

You are receiving this message because you have a relationship with one of the Government's funders of social services, including the Ministry of Social Development (MSD), Oranga Tamariki, the Department of Corrections, the Accident Compensation Commission, Te Puni Kokiri and the Ministries of Justice, Health and Education. These emails are our way of collectively communicating key information that is relevant to all organisations providing social services.

You can read all the previous emails sent in relation to the current outbreak of COVID-19 on the [MSD website here](#).

This afternoon the Prime Minister announced that:

- Auckland will remain at COVID-19 Alert Level 4 until 11.59pm on 31 August 2021, and this will be reviewed on Monday 30 August
- The rest of New Zealand will remain at COVID-19 Alert Level 4 until 11.59pm on 27 August 2021, and this will be reviewed on Friday 27 August.

The key requirements for the current Alert Level can be found on the [Unite against COVID-19 website](#).

We recognise that extending the time that the country remains at COVID-19 Alert Level 4 will increase the stress on families and potentially your own organisation. We have all learned from the experiences of previous lockdowns and want to work proactively with you to address issues that we expect to arise.

Access to food or essential items

We know that concern around access to food and other essential items is going to increase for individuals and families. Please have a look at the following updated information on available support:

- updated information for people that need help, support or advice can be found on the [Unite against COVID-19 website](#)
- updated information for communities on [access to food or essential items can be found on the Unite against COVID-19 website](#)
- information for community organisations [about food provision and distribution on the Ministry of Social Development website](#).

Mandatory COVID-19 record keeping

Mandatory record keeping is being introduced for busy places and large gatherings to ensure the

Government can contact trace quickly. This will come into effect seven days after we change alert levels. COVID-19 tracer app scanning and record keeping will then become a requirement under all alert levels for everyone 12 and older.

This requirement will depend on whether the business or service is allowed to be open at the current alert level settings, and if so record keeping will be required for when the business or location is operating. Places where it will be mandatory to ensure records are kept will include social services providers with customer service counters.

The obligation for these mandatory record keeping requirements will be borne by the person responsible for a place or gathering. They will be required to have systems and processes in place to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that people scan the QR code for the place or gathering or provide details in a contact tracing record. The seven-day window provides businesses and other locations where record keeping will be required with time to ensure they have record keeping systems and processes in place.

You can read the full announcement on the [Unite against COVID-19 website](#).

In addition to this, where social service workers have face to face contact with a person or family in another setting (for example in their home), a record of this contact should also be kept in a form that can be readily made available for contact tracing purposes if required. The information collected should include the person's full name, a method for contacting the person (e.g. contact phone number, email address), the location of the interaction, as well as the date and time period.

Access to personal protective equipment (PPE)

We are starting to receive queries about whether social service organisations can access PPE through government sources. Currently we would like to reiterate our previous advice to you, which is:

- organisations should continue to accumulate stocks of PPE through normal commercial channels as part of their business continuity and emergency planning
- in many instances where face coverings are mandatory for business and services operating at COVID-19 Alert Level 4, a reusable face mask or another form of face covering (e.g. a scarf) is sufficient
- you can read more about wearing face coverings and how to make them on the [Unite against COVID-19 website](#)
- if you are not able to access the PPE you need to deliver services, please contact your contract or relationship manager to discuss how we can help
- please inform individuals and families you are working with about the alternatives to using a disposable face mask
- if they do need to access a supply of disposable face masks, they can contact their local food bank to see if they can assist.

Keep in touch

If you have any questions about this or any other issues, you can email Community_Information@msd.govt.nz

Please regularly check the [Government's COVID-19 website](#) for updated information.

Ngā mihi

Ministry of Social Development on behalf of Government agencies that provide social service funding

If you have any queries, please contact us at Community_information@msd.govt.nz



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