

Updates to essential businesses content – for updating 24 March 2020

<https://covid19.govt.nz/government-actions/covid-19-alert-level/>

Essential businesses

Only businesses that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life may remain open during the Level 4 Alert period. If a business is unsure whether it provides such products or services, it should shut its premises.

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand.

This means food, medicine, healthcare, energy, fuel, waste-removal, internet and financial support will continue to be available.

Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all interactions with others outside of your household. The purpose of escalating our alert level to 4 is to stop the virus in its tracks and reduce contact between people. We need as many businesses as possible to close now if our one shot at beating the virus is to be successful.

The essential services list identifies work that can continue from business premises at Level 4, as long as it is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

It may be possible to deliver some essential services entirely with staff working remotely from home. However, if essential workers are required to leave home to work, then their business must:

- a. Minimise personal interactions, amongst staff and with customers and
- b. Ensure all appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place.

It is for an industry or business to decide how best to meet these aims in a practical way – the approach must be workable. This could include the likes of:

- Working from home as far as possible

- Limiting staff interaction through personal distancing and split shifts
- Limiting interaction with and between customers eg through online or phone orders, contactless delivery and/or managed entry
- Frequent cleaning of counters and EFTPOS terminals
- Personal protection equipment for staff
- Hygiene basics including hand washing and sanitisers

Businesses who need more advice can contact essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. This means businesses carrying out these functions can remain open, including any critical suppliers in their supply chains (eg a firm repairing IT and data infrastructure without which an entity cannot provide an essential service).

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at 8 pm, 24 March 2020.

Sectors	Entities providing essential services (including their supply chains)
Accommodation Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any entity that provides accommodation services for essential workers, isolation/quarantine, and emergency housing • Retirement villages
Border Lead agency: Customs New Zealand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customs New Zealand, Immigration New Zealand and the Ministry for Primary Industries
Building and construction Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure • Any entity involved in building and construction required immediately to maintain human health and safety at home or work

Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any entity that performs or is involved in building and resource consenting necessary for the above purposes
Courts, tribunals and the justice system Lead agency: Ministry of Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Courts of New Zealand, tribunals Critical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission)
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	Only at COVID-19 Alert Level 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any person employed or contracted as teaching, nursery and childcare staff, including specialist education professionals and others who provide support (eg to disabled children) Any person employed by or contracted to an educational facility Any entity supplying educational facilities or educational materials (eg printers)
Fast-moving consumer goods Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any entity involved in the supply, delivery, distribution and sale of food, beverage and other key consumer goods essential for maintaining the wellbeing of people,
Financial services Lead agencies: Financial Markets Authority and Reserve Bank of New Zealand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Banks, insurers and other financial institutions, including any entity that contracts or provides services to them (eg secure money delivery services) Securities registries NZX
Health Lead agency: Ministry of Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District Health Boards (and all of their facilities), Pharmac, New Zealand Blood Service, Health Promotion Agency, Health Quality and Safety Commission Any person employed or contracted as a doctor, nurse, midwife, pharmacist, paramedic, medical laboratory scientists, kaiāwhina workers, social workers, aged care and community workers, and caregivers more generally Hospitals, primary care clinics, pharmacies, medical laboratories, care facilities (eg rest homes) Any entity providing ambulance services Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE
<p>Local and national government</p> <p>Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any entity involved in COVID-19 response, enforcement, planning or logistics or that has civil defence/emergency management functions (including any entity that supplies services for these purposes) Key public services
<p>Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing</p> <p>Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any entity involved in the packaging, production and processing of food and beverage products, whether for domestic consumption or export Any entity involved in relevant support services, such as food safety and verification, inspection or associated laboratory services, food safety and biosecurity functions Any entity providing veterinary services Any entity whose closure would jeopardise the maintenance of animal health or welfare standards (including the short-term survival of a species)
<p>Public safety and national security</p> <p>Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department of Corrections, Fire and Emergency New Zealand, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Justice, New Zealand Defence Force, New Zealand Police, New Zealand Security Intelligence Service, Government Communications Security Bureau Courts of New Zealand Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role
<p>Science</p> <p>Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESR, GNS, GeoNet, NIWA, MetService Any entity (including research organisations) involved in COVID-19 response Any entity (including research organisations) involved in hazard monitoring and resilience Any entity (including research organisations) involved in diagnostics for essential services like biosecurity, public health Laboratories and Physical Containment level 3 (PC3) facilities that could provide essential services and products that could be used to respond to COVID-19 Other significant research facilities including animal facilities, clinical trials and infrastructure that requires constant attention (eg samples, collections and storage facilities) that are important to New Zealand

<p>Social services Lead agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, to be specified jointly by the Ministry of Social Development and Oranga Tamariki
<p>Transport and logistics Lead agency: Ministry of Transport</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Transport, New Zealand Customs, New Zealand Transport Agency, Civil Aviation Authority (including Aviation Security Service), Maritime New Zealand (including the Rescue Coordination Centre), Airways NZ, MetService, KiwiRail (including Interislander), and any entity which is contracted by these entities • Any entity that provides, or is contracted to an entity that provides, logistics services, including New Zealand Post and courier services • Any entity providing, or is contracted by an entity that provides, transport services to the Ministry of Health, a District Health Board, a Medical Officer of Health, or a Controller (as defined in section 4 of the Civil Defence and Emergency Management Act 2002) • Any entity which provides services related to the maintenance and ongoing operation of critical infrastructure (eg roads, rail, ports, airports) • Any entity which operates or is contracted by an entity listed in Schedule 1 of the Civil Defence and Emergency Management Act 2002, an aerodrome, a passenger and/or freight aviation service, a passenger and/or freight shipping service, a road freight service, a rail freight service, a vehicle recovery service; or a public transport service (under contract with a Regional Council) • Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) • Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
<p>Utilities and communications, including supply chains Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection), fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities • News (including news production) and broadcast media • Internet service providers • Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains • Any entity supplying services to an essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services)

Decisions made by Cabinet, 24 March 2020

- Dairies can remain open, with a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food.
- Food delivery is prohibited, except meals-on-wheels and whole food delivery (eg subscription food boxes).
- Every restaurant, café and bar must close all aspects of their operation.
- Liquor stores must close, unless they are within Licensing Trust areas (in which case they can operate with a one-in-one-out rule).
- Self-service laundries can stay open, with two meter physical distancing to be enforced.
- Retirement villages are included as an essential service.
- The Warehouse must close.
- Bunnings, Placemakers, Mitre 10 and other retailers essential to the supply chain for building and construction can stay open to trade customers for essential purposes only.
- The Tiwai Point smelter is exempt from closure.
- NZ Steel is to shut down in a way that allows for production to recommence easily.
- Pulp and paper plants are to shut down their non-essential elements in a way that allows for production to recommence easily, and while maintaining essential production.
- Methanex can remain in production, but at a scale consistent with the stability of gas supply.

For the avoidance of doubt, sectors and occupations specified in the following are also included in this list of essential services:

- Schedule 1 of the Civil Defence and Emergency Management CDEM Act 2002 Schedule 1 of lifeline utilities, and
- Employment Relations Act 2000 Schedule 1 of essential services.

The entities listed above can continue to operate premises but must put in place alternative ways of working to keep employees safe, including shift-based working, staggered meal breaks, flexible leave arrangements and physical distancing.

Contact us at essential@mbie.govt.nz for more information.

More specific information for each sector will be published shortly.

Download the list of essential businesses

[Essential businesses list as at 8 pm, 23 March 2020 \[PDF, 137 KB\]](#)



Non-essential businesses

Non-essential businesses must now close their premises. All bars, restaurants, cafes, gyms, cinemas, pools, museums, libraries, playgrounds and any other place where the public congregate must close their face to face functions.

If you are a business or worker in a non-essential business, you may still work – as long as this is from home. If you cannot work remotely, you must stay home.

We need your support to protect New Zealand and eradicate COVID-19.

Enforcement measures may be used to ensure everyone acts together, now.