



COVID-19 UPDATE

24 August 2021

Kia ora koutou katoa,

We have lived under COVID-19 Alert Level 4 for almost a week now and this will continue for a few days yet. We know the lockdown rules and why they are important. We also know the stress and hardship these circumstances can cause.

That is why I wanted to make sure that our communities are aware of the many types of support that are available. Some people are finding things difficult so please help share this information with the communities you work with and represent.

Financial support

The Alert Level 4 restrictions put financial pressure on some people and is particularly tough for those on lower incomes. If anyone is struggling, financial support is available from Work and Income.

Anyone in need of financial assistance should visit [the Work and Income website](#) or call one of their phone lines:

[0800 559 009](tel:0800559009) (MSD General Line)

[0800 552 002](tel:0800552002) (Seniors 65+)

[0800 88 99 00](tel:0800889900) (Students).

Access to food

People needing food urgently can contact [their local foodbank](#). For those needing Halal or Kosher food, if your local foodbank cannot provide that they can put you in touch with foodbanks that can.

We have also been contacted by people asking how they can register as a foodbank. A number of ethnic community organisations did an amazing job keeping people fed during previous lockdowns and if you would like to help you can register at familyservices.govt.nz

For those who cannot easily visit a supermarket, through mobility issues or the need to self isolate supermarkets are providing delivery services. It is worth seeing if friends or family can drop-off essential supplies for speed. In addition the Student Volunteer Army are collecting people's shopping and delivering it for them. [You can find more information at their website.](#)

Mental health

There has been an understandable rise in anxiety as New Zealanders deal with the latest COVID-19 outbreak. Nobody should feel ashamed about this - feeling anxious or depressed is a normal reaction to stressful situations.

It is important to reach out for help and there are are helplines available that offer support. The services listed below are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- **Need to Talk?** — free call or text [1737](#) any time for support from a trained counsellor
[Find out more about Need to Talk? 1737](#)
- **Youthline** — call [0800 376 633](#), free text [234](#) or email talk@youthline.co.nz
[Chat online or find out more at Youthline](#)
- **What's Up?** — call [0800 942 8787](#) — a safe place for tamariki and rangatahi to talk.
[Find out more about What's Up?](#)
- **Skylight** — call [0800 299 100](#) helping children, young people and their families and whānau through tough times of change, loss, trauma and grief
[Find out more about Skylight](#)
- **Lifeline** — [0800 543 354](#) (0800 LIFELINE) or free text [4357](#) (HELP)
[Find out more about Lifeline](#)
- **Suicide Crisis Helpline** — [0508 828 865](#) (0508 TAUTOKO)
[Find out more about the Suicide Crisis Helpline](#)
- **Depression and Anxiety Helpline** — [0800 111 757](#) or free text [4202](#) to talk to a trained counsellor about how you are feeling or to ask any questions.
[Find out more about the Depression and Anxiety Helpline](#)
- **Anxiety phone line** — [0800 269 4389](#) (0800 ANXIETY)
[Find out more about the Anxiety phone line](#)

- **Family Services 211 Helpline** [0800 211 211](tel:0800211211) — for help finding, and direct transfer to, community-based health and social support services in your area
[Visit the Family Services Directory online](#)
- **OUTline NZ** — call [0800 688 5463](tel:08006885463) for confidential telephone support for sexuality or gender identity issues
[Find out more about OUTline](#)

If you, or someone you know is struggling to cope please get in touch with these services. They are here to help.

Financial support for businesses

Government has reactivated the financial support available to businesses impacted by the lockdown. [Information, including a tool for businesses to find out what is available, can be found online.](#)

Keeping yourself and others safe - a reminder of the golden rules

Golden rules for Alert Level 4

-  **Stay at home** in your bubble
-  **Feeling unwell?** Call your doctor or Healthline on **0800 358 5453** about getting tested
- If leaving the house:**
 -  **Wear a mask and keep a 2m distance** from others
 -  **Keep on scanning QR codes**
 -  **Wash and sanitise hands often**
 -  **Stay local and be kind** to one another

Government has summarised the Golden rules for Alert Level 4.

Our team has also made a series of videos, setting out these rules in multiple languages. [You can find them on our website.](#)

Hosting a vaccination centre

We have heard from a number of places of worship, community members and organisations offering to host vaccination centres. It is great to see this because being able to get vaccinated in a familiar environment can make a real difference.

We are talking with the Ministry of Health about this and are putting together a list of people and organisations who want to help. If you would like to be on that list please email us at info@ethniccommunities.govt.nz

It is likely that arrangements will not be put in place until we are out of Alert Level 4.

And remember that the Ministry of Health is seeking interest from people who would like to be part of the COVID-19 vaccination workforce (roles include administration, support and liaison, as well as COVID-19 vaccinators and clinical supervisors). [More information is available at the Ministry of Health website.](#)

Where to get more information

The [covid19.govt.nz website](#) remains the central source of information and updates on COVID-19. [It includes comprehensive information translated into multiple languages.](#)

We are here to help

Our regional teams are here to help. If you need to get in touch with us, or need help connecting with support, here is a list of our Regional Managers. We would be delighted to talk with you.

Northern Region (upper North Island)

Nandita Mathur - 027 299 8031

Central (central and lower-North Island)

Kudakwashe Tuwe - 027 213 5972

Southern Region (South Island)

Shane Whitfield - 029 200 4625

If you prefer, you can reach us by email at info@ethniccommunities.govt.nz

Thank you to everyone who has helped share information. I will keep you updated as decisions are made by Government and new information becomes available. In the meantime take care of yourselves, your families, loved ones, and wider communities.

Ngā mihi nui,

Mervin Singham

Chief Executive, Ministry for Ethnic Communities

Forward to a friend



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