



# Guidelines for Community Organisations Working with Volunteers during COVID-19 Alert Levels

## Requirements under Alert Level 4

Only organisations undertaking essential services may operate during Alert Level 4. Essential services are set out on the COVID-19 website [www.covid19.govt.nz](http://www.covid19.govt.nz).

Essential service organisations may only undertake those activities which are deemed as essential by the Government (i.e. not other non-essential services they might normally also undertake). If your service is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

Note that similar requirements will also apply under Alert Level 3.

### **Organisations should:**

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions with and between staff, volunteers and clients.
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place.
- restrict activity to only what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

### **These practices may include:**


- working from home as much as possible.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, volunteers and clients, e.g. through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between clients, e.g. through online or phone orders, contactless delivery or managed entry (while also avoiding crowding outside), and physical distancing both inside and outside the premises.
- hygiene basics of handwashing and using sanitisers.
- more frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and other high-touch surfaces.
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

Find out more at  
**Covid19.govt.nz**

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The following website provides useful resources on remote volunteering - <https://www.volunteeringnz.org.nz/available-resources/virtual-volunteering/>.

Funding may be available to support social service organisations to transition to providing more services online. Please visit the Ministry of Social Development website for details.

If you are unsure whether you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should not operate until you have put in place appropriate measures.

Any person who is unwell, has had close contact with a possible COVID-19 case, or has been overseas within the previous 14 days is required to self-isolate and may not work within the organisation under any circumstances. For further details please see <https://covid19.govt.nz/businesses-and-employees/essential-businesses/#information-for-business-owners-and-employees>

Many clients of community organisations are amongst the most vulnerable to serious consequences arising from COVID-19. These vulnerable groups include:

- those over 70
- those with a compromised immune system
- others with underlying health conditions.

**It is critical when undertaking essential services that you take all necessary measures to ensure the safety of your volunteers (and staff) and your clients.**

This will mean additional induction and training processes to those you normally undertake. Guidance for volunteers working in a COVID-19 environment is attached and should be provided to all volunteers.

If your organisation would like to support community initiatives related to the COVID-19 response or related community needs, **please contact your local civil defence/Council in the first instance** to ensure that support is coordinated.

If you are seeking additional volunteers to support your essential service work please visit the Volunteering New Zealand website ([www.volunteeringnz.org.nz](http://www.volunteeringnz.org.nz)). The Volunteer Centre network has mobilised to take expressions of interest from those available to help during the pandemic.

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