



Unite
against
COVID-19

COVID-19 Alert Level 3

Safe Practice Guidance

for Food Service,

Food Retail & Food

Manufacturing Businesses

(Updated: 17 September 2021)

This guidance provides New Zealand food service, food retail and food manufacturing businesses, working under the Food Act 2014, with information to help keep their customers and staff safe during COVID-19 Alert Level 3.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE COVID-19 ALERT LEVELS

This checklist is to assist food service, retail and manufacturing businesses with what is needed to operate under the COVID-19 response.

	Level 4 Eliminate Likely that disease is not contained	Level 3 Restrict Heightened risk that disease is not contained	Level 2 Reduce Disease is contained, but risks of community transmission growing	Level 1 Prepare Disease is contained	State of Emergency lifted
Minimum requirements for each Alert Level					
Increased staff wellness and hygiene procedures	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Contact tracing	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Contactless payment where practical when ordering and/or delivering	✓	✓	✓ <small>Note: this is recommended where possible</small>		
Masks worn at all times	✓	✓	✓ <small>Note: this is recommended where physical distancing can't be maintained</small>		
Staff/customers have physical distancing of 2 metres or more	✓	✓			
Staff/customers have physical distancing of 1 to 2 metres where unavoidable	✓	✓	✓	✳	



Refer to the [WorkSafe website](#) for physical distancing guidance.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this guidance is to provide food businesses with the information they need to implement procedures that minimise the risk of the more transmissible variants of COVID-19. This guidance provides ways to protect the health and safety of staff and customers under Alert Level 3.

Food service, retail and manufacturing businesses can operate, but customers cannot enter the premises (unless these are supermarkets, dairies, petrol stations, food banks, butchers, greengrocers and fishmongers). Food and drink can't be consumed on the premises. Bakeries can sell via contactless delivery or pick-up, but cannot allow customers onto their premises.

To keep doing what you do best (making and selling great safe and suitable food), you'll need to continue following your Food Control Plan or National Programme with some important additional steps shown below.

Click on the page numbers to go to each procedure.



Contact tracing and record keeping

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Increase staff health and hygiene procedures

[Page 2](#)



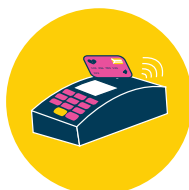
Implement physical distancing rules

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Create and manage workplace bubbles

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Contactless payment/delivery/ordering

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Increase cleaning and sanitising

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Wear personal protective equipment (PPE)

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Know your procedures are working

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Owners/managers must use this guidance with their existing plans. They are responsible for ensuring that the procedures are working, and adjusting when necessary.

For the latest status updates and information about COVID-19, visit:

- [Unite against COVID-19](#) – New Zealand Government
- [COVID-19 \(novel coronavirus\)](#) – Ministry of Health
- [COVID-19 and food safety](#) – New Zealand Food Safety.

CONTACT TRACING AND RECORD KEEPING

Contact tracing and record keeping is a vital part in helping prevent the further spread of COVID-19. It is mandatory for all food businesses to display a NZ COVID Tracer QR code in a prominent place at or near your main entrance.

You also must offer a protected and private alternative method of collecting and storing contact records for customers that do not use the NZ COVID Tracer App. You should also provide a simple privacy statement alongside your alternative record keeping system to let people know why the information is needed and how long you need it for. Such as: *This information is being collected to assist in the management of the COVID-19 response. It will be given to public health officials in the event that it is required for contact tracing. We will not use it for any other purpose and will destroy it after 60 days. It will be kept securely here at [name of your business].*

An example of an alternative method is to set up a ballot box with individual paper slips or cards for people to record their name and contact number, and the time and date they visited.



Record keeping slips

Please cut out and provide to customers alongside your record keeping box.

Date: _____ Time: _____ Name: _____ Contact number: _____	Date: _____ Time: _____ Name: _____ Contact number: _____
Date: _____ Time: _____ Name: _____ Contact number: _____	Date: _____ Time: _____ Name: _____ Contact number: _____
Date: _____ Time: _____ Name: _____ Contact number: _____	Date: _____ Time: _____ Name: _____ Contact number: _____
Date: _____ Time: _____ Name: _____ Contact number: _____	Date: _____ Time: _____ Name: _____ Contact number: _____

To Kīwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

Unite against COVID-19

You can download posters and record keeping slips, box stickers and box templates from covid19.govt.nz/posters/

For more information, visit covid19.govt.nz/record-keeping-and-contact-tracing/

STAFF WELLNESS & HYGIENE

To help keep staff safe during COVID-19 Alert Level 3, owners/managers need to gather information on workers' wellness to ensure they are well to work. This includes:

- Ensuring staff have not been at any 'locations of interest' at relevant dates and times.
- Daily checking that staff do not have any COVID-19 symptoms before and during work. This includes regular temperature checks. Any staff or visitors with elevated temperatures should not be permitted on-site or should be sent home immediately.
- Ensuring that any staff with symptoms stay home until medical advice is obtained, and they are cleared to return to work.
- Reducing the likelihood of sick staff feeling they need to come to work. It is important that staff can take paid sick leave if they are feeling unwell.



Sign in

Staff, contractors and suppliers should sign in when entering the workplace. Make sure you can trace the movements and interactions of staff.



Report

If staff feel unwell or have an elevated temperature, they should report to management and go home. They should contact the Healthline on 0800 358 5453 or their local GP.



Stay home

Staff must not come to work if they, or others in their bubble, feel unwell. If it's possible, staff should work from home. If identified as a close contact of a suspect or confirmed COVID-19 case, they should self-isolate and not come to work for 14 days. Refer to Ministry of Health guidance.

How to correctly wash hands



Wet hands under running water



Rub hands together with soap for 20 seconds



Rinse hands with water



Dry hands thoroughly with disposable towels

Staff need to remember to always wash their hands after blowing their nose, sneezing or coughing. Refer to your Food Control Plan or National Programme for more information on hand washing.



Cough or sneeze into your elbow or by covering your mouth and nose with tissues



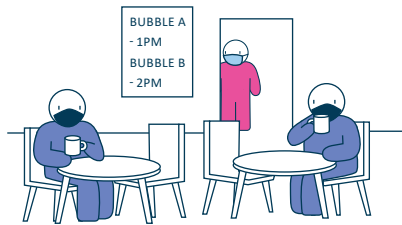
Avoid touching your face

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

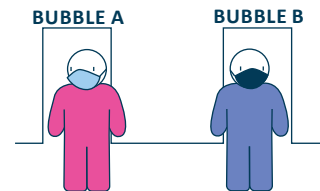
Food businesses must protect their workers and the public by avoiding face-to-face contact and reducing the potential spread of COVID-19. Under Alert Level 3, customers can't come onto your premises — unless you are a supermarket, dairy, petrol station, butcher, green grocer or fishmonger. Food service, retail and manufacturing businesses must maintain at least 2 metre or more physical distancing where possible — at all times for staff, suppliers and customers. Although bakeries can't have customers on their premises, physical distancing rules apply for staff and suppliers.

Here are some ways to support physical distancing:

Use staggered breaks and/or change over times for different work bubbles.



Create separate walkways and entry/exits for different work bubbles. If you are a larger site, you should be able to trace movements and interactions of staff on-site.



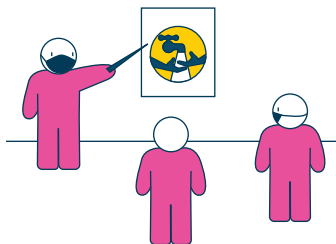
Where a 1 metre distance is not possible, people pass 'side by side' or 'back to back' instead of facing each other in narrow passageways.



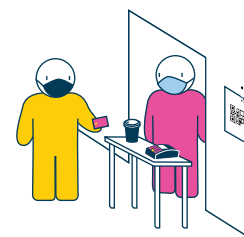
Use additional personal protective equipment (PPE).



Train staff and have clear communication about the additional procedures.



Consumers are not allowed to consume purchased food and drink inside your business premises.



Where possible, consider airflow across the workspace, maximising airflow and directing it away from workers.

If businesses are not able to protect their workers in the ways outlined, they should remain closed.

WORKPLACE 'BUBBLES'

Workplace bubbles

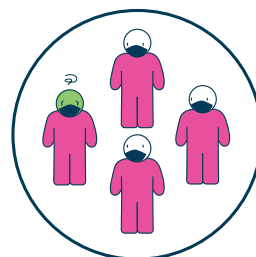
Workplace bubbles are groups or teams of workers that work together without physical contact with other workplace bubbles. This means that if a person in one bubble gets sick, it's only that bubble that will need to be quarantined and the other bubble(s) can continue working and your business won't need to shut down. Note: It's not compulsory for businesses to have workplace bubbles, but it is recommended.

- Think about how staff travel to work, to minimise the risk of exposure to COVID-19.
- Do not mix workplace bubbles. Each work team bubble must work in clearly separated areas of the business and with staggered breaks.
- The size of a bubble will need to be determined by the business, considering how many people are needed to operate and reduce the number of staff in each bubble to the minimum needed.
- If a case or suspected case arises, all workers in the bubble should be managed as specified in the [Guidelines for businesses and services](#).
- Keep records of who is in which bubble, so you can quickly contact the most 'at-risk' staff if someone becomes sick.
- Workplace supervisors should continuously monitor bubble arrangements.

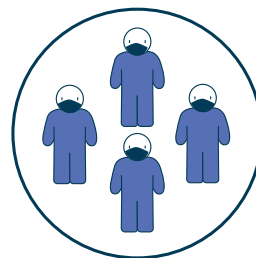
Home workplace bubbles

If you can operate your food business from home, you can use the above information to form workplace bubbles wherever practical.

WORKPLACE BUBBLE A



WORKPLACE BUBBLE B



In the above example Workplace Bubble B is not affected by an illness in Workplace Bubble A.

CONTACTLESS PICK-UP AND DELIVERY

Under Alert Level 3, your food business must be contactless, other than the permitted exceptions (supermarkets, dairies, petrol stations, butchers, fishmongers or green grocers). Your customers can pay online, over the phone or in a contactless way. Delivery or pick-up must also be contactless. Businesses must also operate safely within the general health guidelines, such as physical distancing and hygiene.

When operating with contactless delivery



Customers use paywave at the point of purchase (EFTPOS is ok but staff should sanitise the EFTPOS machines and their hands after contact)



Have hand sanitiser available for staff and customers



The customer's order can be delivered to the car – placed on the bonnet of the car – by a staff member while the customer remains in the car



At the drive-thru: maintain physical distancing measures by placing the food order on a counter or area for customers to pick up



Let customers make and pay for their order over the phone or online via credit or debit, and be given an estimated pick up time

For more information, visit:

- [Unite against COVID-19 Alert Level 3](#)
- [Workplace operations at COVID-19 Alert Levels.](#)

CLEANING AND SANITISING

It is important to frequently clean and sanitise the ‘high-touch’ contact surfaces in your business to help stop the spread of the virus.

Sanitise work area surfaces

Work areas include common rooms, break rooms, and shared equipment (e.g. coffee machines).



Frequently clean and sanitise surfaces, such as tables, benches and chairs.



Identify all frequently-touched surfaces, such as door handles and touch-pads, and make sure these are regularly cleaned and sanitised.



Frequently wash utensils, such as tongs and serving spoons.

Sanitiser product



Make sure you are using an anti-viral product and follow the instructions on the label.



Sanitising doesn't work unless things have been cleaned first. So, wash surfaces with hot soapy water, rinse with clean water, then sanitise.



Read instructions on how long the sanitiser product should be left on different surface types before wiping to be most effective.

For more information, visit [Unite against COVID-19 Clean surfaces](#).

Signage

Signage on safety hygiene should be prominently displayed in work areas and amenities. Find posters at [Unite against COVID-19 Posters](#).



PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

These are general guidelines. For the latest advice on using PPE correctly, refer to [Personal protective equipment for workers](#).



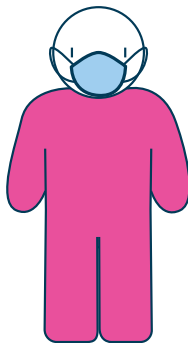
Masks

At Alert Level 3, face masks must be worn by all staff and customers who are 12 years or older.



Gloves

Only use gloves if you normally use these in your business. Gloves are not mandatory, as regular washing of hands is okay.

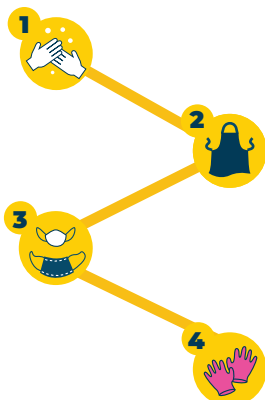


When should I use masks?

- **Masks must be worn at all times in the workplace**
- Put on mask with clean hands
- Do not touch the mask whilst wearing it
- Masks should be replaced immediately if these become inoperable, wet or contaminated
- Wash hands after touching the mask
- For up-to-date advice on wearing masks, see: [Face coverings](#).

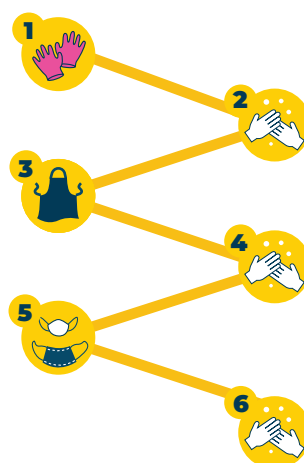
How do I use PPE?

PPE is only effective against reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission when the correct equipment is used properly. Basic hygiene is still required. For more information on how to use PPE, please refer to [PPE use for non-health essential workers](#).



Putting on PPE

1. Wash hands
2. Put on protective clothing
3. Put on mask
4. Put on gloves



Taking off PPE

1. Remove gloves
2. Wash hands
3. Take off protective clothing
4. Wash hands
5. Take off mask
6. Wash hands

KNOWING YOUR PROCEDURES ARE WORKING

You should perform a daily check-in with your staff to ensure that your COVID-19 safety procedures are working.

You will be asked to show how you've implemented these procedures if a COVID-19 Safe Practice Check is undertaken at your business:

<p>Staff are monitored for signs of sickness daily when they begin work. Staff must not come to work if they, or others in their bubble, feel sick. Operators should ensure that their staff have not been at any 'locations of interest' at the relevant dates and times. For contact tracing, there is a record of all people in the premises.</p>	<p>You have printed your QR code and have it displayed at all entrances of your business.</p> 	<p>You have increased staff hygiene and cleaning procedures.</p> 
<p>Workplace supervisors continuously monitor bubble arrangements to minimise contact during Alert Level 3.</p> 	<p>You are using staggered breaks for different work bubbles, to reduce possible contact in common areas.</p> 	<p>You are providing contactless ordering, pick up, delivery and payment, keeping your customers and staff safe.</p> 
<p>Your staff have access to and are using adequate PPE.</p> 	<p>Safety requirements are reinforced through the display of signage and use of information sheets.</p> 	<p>You are following your Food Control Plan or National Programme as usual with the extra procedures to manage COVID-19.</p> 

Physical distancing is maintained at all times between staff and suppliers. You may need to:

- Create 'walkways' so that people are separated when moving through and around their work area
- Create separate entry and exit zones and staggered change-over times, such as meal times
- Encourage people to face away from each other when passing in narrow passageways
- Put in additional measures (for example physical shields) when recommended physical distancing can't be maintained.

If you are due for your food safety verification during COVID-19 Alert levels – we have set up a Remote Check system of Food Act 2014 businesses as an interim measure until on-site verifications can resume. This means that Food Act verifiers that have completed the necessary Remote Check training can complete scheduled verifications with food businesses off-site, via a phone call or using online technology such as Skype.

For more information, food businesses owners/managers can contact their verifier or email foodactinfo@mpi.govt.nz.