

# Health and Safety during COVID-19

## Keeping our people and participants safe under Alert Level 3

The Ministry has developed this health and safety approach at a national level with the ability to adapt at a local level, as each court building has its own unique physical layout, caseload, community, and staffing situation.

We are working to ensure measures are applied effectively, with the overriding principle that health and safety of every person who works in or comes to court must be protected.

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### Hygiene

The best form of defence against contracting the virus is good hygiene. **Hand sanitiser** is available in all buildings. This includes at main entrance points. Toilets contain **antibacterial soap**, which is regularly refilled by the cleaners onsite.

**Cleaning products** are provided at entrance points for everyone to wipe down items placed in screening trays. Staff regularly wipe trays with antibacterial wipes or antibacterial spray and disposable towels.

We have a detailed process for **managing the movement** of persons who are being held in custody to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

The Ministry has developed a **protocol to deal with suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19** in any of the buildings for which it is responsible.

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### Security

We are performing appropriate checks on people entering our buildings, and monitoring physical

distancing requirements, in line with the **Ministry of Health** guidelines.

Court participants are encouraged to download and **scan the COVID-19 QR code** using their mobile phones, otherwise they must provide their name and contact details in the paper register form.

**Signage** tells everyone who feels unwell with cold or flu-like symptoms, including fever, coughing, and difficulty breathing, not to enter the court building.

#### Access is denied to those:

- showing signs of illness such as coughing and sneezing, or report feeling unwell;
- who have a temperature of 38° or above;
- who have had close-contact with a suspected, probable or confirmed case; or
- unwilling to disclose the purpose of their visit or their personal information.

Those who are denied access will be referred to pandemic signage and advised to contact the Ministry on "**0800 COURTS**" (**0800 268 787**).

Thermal scanners will be used at various locations and entry will be refused to those registering a body temperature above 38 degrees Celsius or higher.

Entry is limited to one person at a time at the doorway, maintaining physical distancing.

**Members of public** (including a whānau support person or person for a defendant) **whose presence is not required at court will not be permitted to enter unless granted permission from the**

**presiding judge.** Such permission should be sought in the first instance by email to the registrar in advance (if granted this must be supplied to the Court Security Officer at the front entrance) or on the day of the hearing by requesting a Court Security Officer at the front entrance to convey an application via the registrar to the presiding judge. All such applications will need to identify the reason or reasons why permission is sought and will be determined on a case by case basis. This restriction is necessary to protect others and allow courts to conduct business.

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## Physical distancing

All public counters are closed under Alert Level 3.

**Drop boxes have been set up** in District Courts, open to the public to allow any hard copy documents to be lodged safely without requiring direct contact with staff.

To manage the numbers of people, some **areas have been marked off** in court buildings to help ensure physical distancing is maintained.

Physical distancing requirements in controlled public spaces (where contact tracing and rigorous hygiene protocols are in place) are that **people keep at least one metre apart**. Participants in queues outside will need to keep two metres apart from others standing on the marked areas in the line. Security staff will ensure physical distance is maintained in public areas.

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## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

All Court Security Officers are provided with **disposable gloves, facemasks, and goggles**.

Contracted private security guards will wear the same PPE when working at a court site.

You can wear your own **face covering**, but if you don't have one, PPE (**gloves and face coverings**) is available for all court participants once they have proceeded through the screening point. The Ministry of Health advises you should wear a face covering when out and about under Alert Level 3.

Persons in the custody of Police, Corrections or Oranga Tamariki will be provided with a **face covering** by those respective agencies for use if they wish.

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## Cleaning

The Ministry's cleaning protocols are based on Ministry of Health guidelines. There is **cleaning every night** with an increased focus on **high touch points** throughout public spaces, horizontal surfaces in court and hearing rooms, public counters (including bail counters), and all publicly accessible interview rooms. **A midday cleaning regime** occurs at larger sites specifically focused on high touch points.

**Meeting and interview rooms** have maximum capacity limits and cleaning products available for use before and after meetings.

**Bio-cleans** are conducted in response to suspected cases of COVID-19 at relevant sites.

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The Ministry is following **Ministry of Health guidelines** to ensure the health and safety of all court users and participants in a secure and controlled environment.

*If you have any questions about health and safety at this court, please direct them to the court manager.*