



6 July 2020



Dear 

Reference: OIA-2019/20-0510

Official Information Act request relating to the COVID-19 website

Thank you for your Official Information Act request received on 8 May 2020. You requested:

1. *Archived web pages*

I request copies of any archived versions of webpages DPMC currently holds for the following web pages on each date between 26 March 2020 and 27 April 2020 (dates inclusive):

- *"Essential business" or any equivalent pages hosted at*
 - <https://covid19.govt.nz/government-actions/covid-19-alert-level/essential-businesses/>
 - <https://covid19.govt.nz/government-actions/current-covid-19-alert-level/essential-businesses/>
 - <https://covid19.govt.nz/businesses-and-employees/essential-businesses/>

2. *Changes made to websites*

I request the following kinds of information held in relation to changes made to the web pages listed above on each date between 26 March 2020 and 27 April 2020 (dates inclusive):

- *Any documents containing text to be published, edited, deleted or otherwise altered on the website.*
- *Any emails or other correspondence containing the text to be published, edited, deleted or otherwise altered on the website. In the case of emails I am only interested in the actual text and changes being made to the website. You may readily redact any information relating to email addresses, contact details, job titles, footers and headers etc except for the dates.*
- *Any logs or records of changes made to the website. Again I am only interested in the dates and description of changes made, not any identifying details.*

The time frame for responding to your request was extended under section 15A of the Act by 20 working days because it necessitated a search through a large quantity of information, and consultations to be undertaken before a decision could be made on the request.

As requested in your first question, please see the attached documents for copies of the archived versions of the webpages held by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC). Please note the following when viewing the information:

- The essential services page existed as one page that was moved from the "government-actions" section to the "business-and-employees" section. This is reflected in the change of the page's URL.
- Links to other internal content (like pages on the covid19.govt.nz website) will not link to the location they linked to at the time of publication, they will link to either where the page exists now, or to an internal link format (e.g. "sitetree_link,id=194").
- All publication dates and times are in NZ time (e.g. NZ Daylight Time prior to 05 April at 02:00, and NZ Standard Time after 05 April at 03:00).
- The first version of the page included is from 25 March at 23:51:14 (the day before the OIA request indicates), this is because this is the content that is present on the website from midnight on the 26th (the beginning of the OIA request timeframe) until the first content publication event on the 26th March (at 10:03:56).
- The page was retired from the website on 28 April 2020 at 00:16:09 (just after midnight, and just after the date range requested), so the last version of the page listed (2020-04-27 09.19.41.html) was in place until it was deleted.
- During this timeframe, content was migrated from one format to another. The 'Content type' field added in the header of each archived version of content indicates this (either 'Standard content page' or 'Content blocks').

Finally, in relation to question two, unfortunately, due to the volumes of information identified and consultations required, there have been delays in the processing this information. We will provide you with a response on the balance of this further information as soon as we are able. If we have not provide a response to the remainder of your request by 3 August 2020, we will contact you to update you on our progress. Please be assured, if it is at all possible, we will respond to your request sooner.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

Finally, for your information, this response will be published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Yours sincerely



John Ombler
Deputy Chief Executive,
COVID-19 All-of-Government Response Group

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 69

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Level 4 Alert period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to stop the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- Minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- Limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff e.g. through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- Limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- Frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- Protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call 0508 377 388.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call 0800 00 83 33.

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 (e.g. 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 7 pm, 25 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 housingRetirement 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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructureAny entity involved in building and construction required immediately to maintain human health and safety at home or workAny 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (e.g. Electoral Commission)
At level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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. This includes the online sales and contactless delivery of alcohol.
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 registriesNZX

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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)

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga

- 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

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- 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)

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- 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
- The delivery of firewood for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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 (e.g. cleaning, security services)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (e.g lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 7 pm, 25 March 2020

- Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets.
- Natural health services are considered non-essential.
- Security is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- Critical support services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**.
- 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 2 metre 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.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

There will also be a team at MPI to answer queries related to Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing. Primary sector businesses may contact MPI at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz for further details on registering or the registration process.

Questions and answers

For businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are those that the Government has decided can continue operating at premises under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- If your staff can work from home, they must.
- If they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19.
- You must only operate what is essential during the Alert 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these business must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): 0800 300 362
- Central Region (Business Central): 0800 800 362
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: 0800 50 50 96
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: 0508 656 757

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services to essential businesses only.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

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

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- Working from home as far as possible.
- Limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff e.g. through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- Limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- Frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- Protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you are part of the primary sector, MPI is requiring essential primary industries businesses to register with them.

[Register with MPI](#)

What does the "supply chain" mean?

The "supply chain" for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain what is expected of me?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service, during the Alert Level 4 period. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are "fast moving consumer goods"?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- Food,
- Beverages,
- Toiletries and personal care items,
- Cleaning products,
- Baby products eg formula and nappies,

- Pet food,
- Over-the-counter medicines,
- Alcohol & tobacco, and
- Stationery.

For workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures, or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

For consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services must shut down at level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on societies wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Under Alert Level 4, people can still purchase alcohol from supermarkets. Liquor stores are closed unless they are within a Licensing Trust area.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol, potentially breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will be only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

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.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 71

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

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Building and construction Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructureAny entity involved in building and construction required immediately to maintain human health and safety at home or workAny 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (e.g. Electoral Commission)
At level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny entity supplying educational facilities or educational materials (eg printers)
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Lead agency: Ministry of Health

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- 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)
- Emergency dental care services
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Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga

- 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

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- 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)

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- 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
- The delivery of firewood for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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 (e.g. cleaning, security services)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (e.g lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 7 pm, 25 March 2020

- Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets.
- Natural health services are considered non-essential.
- Security is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- Critical support services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**.
- 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 2 metre 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.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

There will also be a team at MPI to answer queries related to Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing. Primary sector businesses may contact MPI at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz for further details on registering or the registration process.

Questions and answers

For businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are those that the Government has decided can continue operating at premises under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- If your staff can work from home, they must.
- If they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19.
- You must only operate what is essential during the Alert 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these business must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

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- Central Region (Business Central): 0800 800 362
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: 0800 50 50 96
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How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

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My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services to essential businesses only.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

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

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- Working from home as far as possible.
- Limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff e.g. through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- Limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- Frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- Protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you are part of the primary sector, MPI is requiring essential primary industries businesses to register with them.

[Register with MPI](#)

What does the "supply chain" mean?

The "supply chain" for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain what is expected of me?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service, during the Alert Level 4 period. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are "fast moving consumer goods"?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- Food,
- Beverages,
- Toiletries and personal care items,
- Cleaning products,
- Baby products eg formula and nappies,

- Pet food,
- Over-the-counter medicines,
- Alcohol & tobacco, and
- Stationery.

For workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures, or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

For consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services must shut down at level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on societies wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Under Alert Level 4, people can still purchase alcohol from supermarkets. Liquor stores are closed unless they are within a Licensing Trust area.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol, potentially breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will be only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

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.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 73

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0508 377 388**.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **7pm, 25 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 housingRetirement 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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructureAny entity involved in building and construction required immediately to maintain human health and safety at home or workAny 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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. This includes the online sales and contactless delivery of alcohol.
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 registriesNZX.

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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
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It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- Working from home as far as possible.
- Limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff e.g. through physical distancing, split

shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.

- Limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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.
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The "supply chain" for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain what is expected of me?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service, during the Alert Level 4 period. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are "fast moving consumer goods"?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- Food,
- Beverages,

- Toiletries and personal care items,
- Cleaning products,
- Baby products eg formula and nappies,
- Pet food,
- Over-the-counter medicines,
- Alcohol & tobacco, and
- Stationery.

For workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures, or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

For consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services must shut down at level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on societies wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Under Alert Level 4, people can still purchase alcohol from supermarkets. Liquor stores are closed unless they are within a Licensing Trust area.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to

purchase alcohol, potentially breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will be only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

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.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 76

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0508 377 388**.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **7pm, 25 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 housingRetirement 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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructureAny entity involved in building and construction required immediately to maintain human health and safety at home or workAny 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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. This includes the online sales and contactless delivery of alcohol.
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 registriesNZX.

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga

- 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.

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.

[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- 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
- The delivery of firewood for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 7pm, 25 March 2020

- Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- Natural health services are considered non-essential
- Security is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- Critical support services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
- 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 are

okay)

- 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 2 metre 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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

There will also be a team at MPI to answer queries related to Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing. Primary sector businesses may contact MPI at **0800 00 83 33** or info@mpi.govt.nz for further details on registering or the registration process.

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these business must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become

essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): 0800 300 362
- Central Region (Business Central): 0800 800 362
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: 0800 50 50 96
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: 0508 656 757

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you are part of the primary sector, MPI is requiring essential primary industries businesses to register with them.

[Register with MPI](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

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These would typically include:

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Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

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Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga

- 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.

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.

[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- 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
- The delivery of firewood for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 7pm, 25 March 2020

- Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- Natural health services are considered non-essential
- Security is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- Critical support services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
- 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 are

okay)

- 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 2 metre 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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

There will also be a team at MPI to answer queries related to Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing. Primary sector businesses may contact MPI at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz for further details on registering or the registration process. A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services](#)

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate

with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these business must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): 0800 300 362
- Central Region (Business Central): 0800 800 362
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: 0800 50 50 96
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: 0508 656 757

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible

- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how man manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you are part of the primary sector, MPI is requiring essential primary industries businesses to register with them.

[Register with MPI](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,

- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol and tobacco
- stationery.

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures, or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

For consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services must shut down at level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on societies wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Under Alert Level 4, people can still purchase alcohol from supermarkets. Liquor stores are closed unless they are within a Licensing Trust area.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol, potentially breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will be only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

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.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 88

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0508 377 388**.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **7pm, 25 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 housingRetirement 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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructureAny entity involved in building and construction required immediately to maintain human health and safety at home or workAny 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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. This includes the online sales and contactless delivery of alcohol.
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 registriesNZX.

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
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[Key services](#)

Why should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

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- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these business must close their operations.

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- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

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The list may be updated by the Government.

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If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how man manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you are part of the primary sector, MPI is requiring essential primary industries businesses to register with them.

[Register with MPI](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol and tobacco
- stationery.

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures, or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

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Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on societies wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Under Alert Level 4, people can still purchase alcohol from supermarkets. Liquor stores are closed unless they are within a Licensing Trust area.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will be only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 90

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0508 377 388**.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **7pm, 25 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 housingRetirement 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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructureAny entity involved in building and construction required immediately to maintain human health and safety at home or workAny 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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. This includes the online sales and contactless delivery of alcohol.
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 registriesNZX.

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga

- 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.

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.

[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- 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
- The delivery of firewood for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 7pm, 25 March 2020

- Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- Natural health services are considered non-essential
- Security is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- Critical support services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
- 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 are

okay)

- 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 2 metre 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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

There will also be a team at MPI to answer queries related to Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing. Primary sector businesses may contact MPI at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz for further details on registering or the registration process. A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services](#)

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these business must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

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My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

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The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **7pm, 25 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructureAny entity involved in building and construction required immediately to maintain human health and safety at home or workAny 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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. This includes the online sales and contactless delivery of alcohol.
Financial services Lead agencies: Financial Markets Authority and Reserve Bank of New	<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 registriesNZX.

Zealand

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, to be specified jointly by the Ministry of

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of
Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of
Business, Innovation and
Employment, and Ministry
for Culture and Heritage
(for broadcasting)

- 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
- The delivery of firewood for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 3pm, 26 March 2020

- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
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- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are

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- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
- **Dairies** can remain open, with a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food
- **Food delivery** is prohibited. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2 metre 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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0508 377 388**. The call centre is open until 6pm.

There will also be a team at MPI to answer queries related to Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing. Primary sector businesses may contact MPI at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz for further details on registering or the registration process. A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these business must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers

- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you are part of the primary sector, MPI is requiring essential primary industries businesses to register with them.

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol and tobacco
- stationery.

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures, or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on societies wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Under Alert Level 4, people can still purchase alcohol from supermarkets. Liquor stores are closed unless they are in a Licensing Trust area. Open premises in Licensing Trust areas can operate on a one-in-one-out rule. The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is acceptable by supermarkets and liquor stores in Licensing Trust areas only. **Liquor stores outside of Licensing Trust areas may not open to the public or deliver online.**

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will be only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 94

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0508 377 388**.

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- 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).

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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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0508 377 388**. The call centre is open until 6pm.

There will also be a team at MPI to answer queries related to Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing. Primary sector businesses may contact MPI at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz for further details on registering or the registration process. A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

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What should non-essential businesses do?

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

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Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

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If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these business must close their operations.

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Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

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- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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.
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What are 'fast moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol and tobacco
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Questions and answers for workers

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I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on societies wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Under Alert Level 4, people can still purchase alcohol from supermarkets. Liquor stores are closed unless they are in a Licensing Trust area. Open premises in Licensing Trust areas can operate on a one-in-one-out rule. The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is acceptable by supermarkets and liquor stores in Licensing Trust areas only. **Liquor stores outside of Licensing Trust areas may not open to the public or deliver online.**

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will be only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 96

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0508 377 388**.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **3pm, 26 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructureAny entity involved in building and construction required immediately to maintain human health and safety at home or workAny 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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. This includes the online sales and contactless delivery of alcohol.
Financial services Lead agencies: Financial Markets Authority and Reserve Bank of New	<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 registriesNZX.

Zealand

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, to be specified jointly by the Ministry of

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of
Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of
Business, Innovation and
Employment, and Ministry
for Culture and Heritage
(for broadcasting)

- 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
- The delivery of firewood for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 3pm, 26 March 2020

- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg. Contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are

readily available in supermarkets

- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
- **Dairies** can remain open, with a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food
- **Food delivery** is prohibited. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2 metre 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
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- stationery.

Questions and answers for workers

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I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

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What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on societies wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Under Alert Level 4, people can still purchase alcohol from supermarkets. Liquor stores are closed unless they are in a Licensing Trust area. Open premises in Licensing Trust areas can operate on a one-in-one-out rule. The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is acceptable by supermarkets and liquor stores in Licensing Trust areas only. **Liquor stores outside of Licensing Trust areas may not open to the public or deliver online.**

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will be only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 98

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0508 377 388**.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **3pm, 26 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructureAny entity involved in building and construction required immediately to maintain human health and safety at home or workAny 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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. This includes the online sales and contactless delivery of alcohol.
Financial services Lead agencies: Financial Markets Authority and Reserve Bank of New	<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 registriesNZX.

Zealand

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, to be specified jointly by the Ministry of

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of
Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of
Business, Innovation and
Employment, and Ministry
for Culture and Heritage
(for broadcasting)

- 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
- The delivery of firewood for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 3pm, 26 March 2020

- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg. Contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are

readily available in supermarkets

- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
- **Dairies** can remain open, with a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food
- **Food delivery** is prohibited. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2 metre 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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0508 377 388**. The call centre is open until 6pm.

There will also be a team at MPI to answer queries related to Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing. Primary sector businesses may contact MPI at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz for further details on registering or the registration process. A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these business must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers

- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you are part of the primary sector, MPI is requiring essential primary industries businesses to register with them.

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol and tobacco
- stationery.

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures, or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

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Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

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Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, to be specified jointly by the Ministry of

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of
Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of
Business, Innovation and
Employment, and Ministry
for Culture and Heritage
(for broadcasting)

- 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
- The delivery of firewood for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 3pm, 26 March 2020

- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg. Contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are

readily available in supermarkets

- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
- **Dairies** can remain open, with a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food. [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)
- **Food delivery** is prohibited. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2 metre physical distancing to be enforced
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- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0508 377 388**. The call centre is open until 6pm.

There will also be a team at MPI to answer queries related to Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing. Primary sector businesses may contact MPI at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz for further details on registering or the registration process. A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these business must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you are part of the primary sector, MPI is requiring essential primary industries businesses to register with them.

[Register with MPI](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol and tobacco
- stationery.

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures, or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or

when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on societies wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing

essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Under Alert Level 4, people can still purchase alcohol from supermarkets. Liquor stores are closed unless they are in a Licensing Trust area. Open premises in Licensing Trust areas can operate on a one-in-one-out rule. The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is acceptable by supermarkets and liquor stores in Licensing Trust areas only. **Liquor stores outside of Licensing Trust areas may not open to the public or deliver online.**

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will be only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 102

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0508 377 388**.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **3pm, 26 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructureAny entity involved in building and construction required immediately to maintain human health and safety at home or workAny 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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. This includes the online sales and contactless delivery of alcohol.
Financial services Lead agencies: Financial Markets Authority and Reserve Bank of New	<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 registriesNZX.

Zealand

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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
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- 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).

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- Employment Relations Act 2000 Schedule 1 of essential services.

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[Key services: MPI website](#)

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

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If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these business must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

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- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

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If you think your business should be an essential service, ring **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you are part of the primary sector, MPI is requiring essential primary industries businesses to register with them.

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What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol and tobacco
- stationery.

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I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

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If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or

when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

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Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on societies wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing

essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Under Alert Level 4, people can still purchase alcohol from supermarkets. Liquor stores are closed unless they are in a Licensing Trust area. Open premises in Licensing Trust areas can operate on a one-in-one-out rule. The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is acceptable by supermarkets and liquor stores in Licensing Trust areas only. **Liquor stores outside of Licensing Trust areas may not open to the public or deliver online.**

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will be only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 104

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0508 377 388**.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **3pm, 26 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructureAny entity involved in building and construction required immediately to maintain human health and safety at home or workAny 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<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 registriesNZX.

Zealand

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, to be specified jointly by the Ministry of

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of
Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of
Business, Innovation and
Employment, and Ministry
for Culture and Heritage
(for broadcasting)

- 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
- The delivery of firewood for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 3pm, 26 March 2020

- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg. Contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are

readily available in supermarkets

- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
- **Dairies** can remain open, with a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food. [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)
- **Food delivery** is prohibited. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2 metre 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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0508 377 388**. The call centre is open until 6pm.

There will also be a team at MPI to answer queries related to Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing. Primary sector businesses may contact MPI at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz for further details on registering or the registration process. A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these business must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

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Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

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Liquor stores must close to the public unless they are in Licencing Trust areas. Open premises in Licencing Trust areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule. Liquor stores outside of Licencing Trust areas may not open premises to the public. **Liquor stores outside of Licensing Trust areas may not open to the public or deliver online.**

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will be only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

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Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 107

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0508 377 388**.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **6.30 pm, 26 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators,

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Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Social services

supervisors and custodians.

- 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)
 - Emergency dental and optometry care services
 - Any entity providing ambulance services
 - Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
 - Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
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- 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.
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- 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
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 - Any entity whose closure would jeopardise the maintenance of animal health or welfare standards (including the short-term survival of a species).
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- 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.
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- ESR, GNS, GeoNet, NIWA, MetService
 - Any entity (including research organisations) involved in COVID-19 response
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 - 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.

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

social services to meet immediate needs, to be specified jointly by the Ministry of Social Development and Oranga Tamariki.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 6.30 pm, 26 March 2020

- **All supermarkets are considered an essential service**
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of

access conditions. Eg. Contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas

- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
- **Dairies** can remain open, with a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food. [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)
- **Food delivery** is prohibited except for supermarket deliveries. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2 metre 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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0508 377 388**. The call centre is open until 6pm.

There will also be a team at MPI to answer queries related to Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing. Primary sector businesses may contact MPI at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz for further details on registering or the registration process. A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these business must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you are part of the primary sector, MPI is requiring essential primary industries businesses to register with them.

[Register with MPI](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol and tobacco
- stationery.

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures, or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on societies wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Liquor stores must close to the public unless they are in Licencing Trust areas. Open premises in Licencing Trust areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule. Liquor stores outside of Licencing Trust areas may not open premises to the public. **Liquor stores outside of Licensing Trust areas may not open to the public or deliver online.**

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- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

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If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

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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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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.
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Health

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Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

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Social services

supervisors and custodians.

- 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)
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[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 6.30 pm, 26 March 2020

- **All supermarkets are considered an essential service**
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access conditions. Eg. Contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas

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- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
- **Dairies** can remain open, with a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food. [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)
- **Food delivery** is prohibited except for supermarket deliveries. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
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For the avoidance of doubt, sectors and occupations specified in the following are also included in this list of essential services:

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- Employment Relations Act 2000 Schedule 1 of essential services.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0508 377 388**. The call centre is open until 6pm.

There will also be a team at MPI to answer queries related to Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing. Primary sector businesses may contact MPI at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz for further details on registering or the registration process. A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these business must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

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How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

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My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you are part of the primary sector, MPI is requiring essential primary industries businesses to register with them.

[Register with MPI](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol and tobacco
- stationery.

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures, or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on societies wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Liquor stores must close to the public unless they are in Licencing Trust areas. Open premises in Licencing Trust areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule. Liquor stores outside of Licencing Trust areas may not open premises to the public. **Liquor stores outside of Licencing Trust areas may not open to the public or deliver online.**

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will be only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 111

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **6.30 pm, 26 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators,

Reserve Bank of New Zealand

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Social services

supervisors and custodians.

- 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)
 - Emergency dental and optometry care services
 - Any entity providing ambulance services
 - Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
 - Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
-
- 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.
-
- 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).
-
- 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.
-
- 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.

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

social services to meet immediate needs, to be specified jointly by the Ministry of Social Development and Oranga Tamariki.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

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- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
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At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

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What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

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If you think your business should be an essential service, ring **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

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If you are part of the primary sector, MPI is requiring essential primary industries businesses to register with them.

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What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

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What are 'fast moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
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- over-the-counter medicines
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If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

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If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

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Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

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Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on societies wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Liquor stores must close to the public unless they are in Licencing Trust areas. Open premises in Licencing Trust areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule. Liquor stores outside of Licencing Trust areas may not open premises to the public. **Liquor stores outside of Licensing Trust areas may not open to the public or deliver online.**

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will be only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 113

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **7.30 pm, 26 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators,

Reserve Bank of New Zealand

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Social services

supervisors and custodians.

- 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)
 - Emergency dental and optometry care services
 - Any entity providing ambulance services
 - Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
 - Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
-
- 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.
-
- 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).
-
- 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.
-
- 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.

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

social services to meet immediate needs, to be specified jointly by the Ministry of Social Development and Oranga Tamariki.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 7.30 pm, 26 March 2020

- **All supermarkets are considered an essential service**
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols, and management of access. Eg. contact to be

maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas

- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg. Contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. However, as the deadline for domestic travel has been extended until midnight Friday 27 March, anyone in the process of moving house will need to complete their move before the end of Friday. Similarly, all furniture deliveries currently in transit would need to be also be delivered by the end of Friday
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
- **Dairies** can remain open, with a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food. [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)
- **Food delivery** is prohibited except for supermarket deliveries. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay)
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services. Please refer to [the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2 metre physical distancing to be enforced
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

There will also be a team at MPI to answer queries related to Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing. Primary sector businesses may contact MPI at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz for further details on registering or the registration process. A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these business must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
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Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

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Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 115

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

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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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
Border Lead agency: Customs New Zealand	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Customs New Zealand, Immigration New Zealand and the Ministry for Primary Industries.
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Courts, tribunals and the justice system Lead agency: Ministry of Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Courts of New Zealand, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
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Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators,

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Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Social services

supervisors and custodians.

- 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)
 - Emergency dental and optometry care services
 - Any entity providing ambulance services
 - Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
 - Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
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- 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.
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- 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).
-
- 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.
-
- 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.

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

social services to meet immediate needs, to be specified jointly by the Ministry of Social Development and Oranga Tamariki.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 7.30 pm, 26 March 2020

- **All supermarkets are considered an essential service**
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be

maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas

- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. However, as the deadline for domestic travel has been extended until midnight Friday 27 March, anyone in the process of moving house will need to complete their move before the end of Friday. Similarly, all furniture deliveries currently in transit would need to be also be delivered by the end of Friday
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
- **Dairies** can remain open, with a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food. [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)
- **Food delivery** is prohibited except for supermarket deliveries. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole-food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay)
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services. Please refer to [the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

There will also be a team at MPI to answer queries related to Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing. Primary sector businesses may contact MPI at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz for further details on registering or the registration process. A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific

activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you are part of the primary sector, MPI is requiring essential primary industries businesses to register with them.

[Register with MPI](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol and tobacco
- stationery.

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

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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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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.
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Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

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Social services

supervisors and custodians.

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 - Emergency dental and optometry care services
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-
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 - 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
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Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

social services to meet immediate needs, to be specified jointly by the Ministry of Social Development and Oranga Tamariki.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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)
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Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

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Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 7.30 pm, 26 March 2020

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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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

There will also be a team at MPI to answer queries related to Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing. Primary sector businesses may contact MPI at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz for further details on registering or the registration process. A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at **0800 22 66 57** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific

activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you are part of the primary sector, MPI is requiring essential primary industries businesses to register with them.

[Register with MPI](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol and tobacco
- stationery.

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Liquor stores must close to the public unless they are in Licencing Trust areas. Open premises in Licencing Trust areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule. Liquor stores outside of Licencing Trust areas may not open premises to the public. **Liquor stores outside of Licensing Trust areas may not open to the public or deliver online.**

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 119

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **7.30 pm, 26 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators,

Reserve Bank of New Zealand

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Social services

supervisors and custodians.

- 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)
 - Emergency dental and optometry care services
 - Any entity providing ambulance services
 - Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
 - Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
-
- 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.
-
- 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).
-
- 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.
-
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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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

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The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at **0800 22 66 57** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific

activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring **0800 22 66 57** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you are part of the primary sector, MPI is requiring essential primary industries businesses to register with them.

[Register with MPI](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol and tobacco
- stationery.

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Liquor stores must close to the public unless they are in Licencing Trust areas. Open premises in Licencing Trust areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule. Liquor stores outside of Licencing Trust areas may not open premises to the public. **Liquor stores outside of Licensing Trust areas may not open to the public or deliver online.**

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 123

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **7.30 pm, 26 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators,

Reserve Bank of New Zealand

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Social services

supervisors and custodians.

- 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)
 - Emergency dental and optometry care services
 - Any entity providing ambulance services
 - Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
 - Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
-
- 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.
-
- 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).
-
- 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.
-
- 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.

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

social services to meet immediate needs, to be specified jointly by the Ministry of Social Development and Oranga Tamariki.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 7.30 pm, 26 March 2020

- **All supermarkets are considered an essential service**
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be

maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas

- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. However, as the deadline for domestic travel has been extended until midnight Friday 27 March, anyone in the process of moving house will need to complete their move before the end of Friday. Similarly, all furniture deliveries currently in transit would need to be also be delivered by the end of Friday
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
- **Dairies** can remain open, with a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food. [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)
- **Food delivery** is prohibited except for supermarket deliveries. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole-food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay)
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services. Please refer to [the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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.

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- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
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Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
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It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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.
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- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

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Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

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[Register with MPI](#)

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What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol and tobacco
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or visit <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/covid-19-essential-primary-sector-service-registration/>

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Liquor stores must close to the public unless they are in Licencing Trust areas. Open premises in Licencing Trust areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule. Liquor stores outside of Licencing Trust areas may not open premises to the public. **Liquor stores outside of Licensing Trust areas may not open to the public or deliver online.**

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 125

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **7.30 pm, 26 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators,

Reserve Bank of New Zealand

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Social services

supervisors and custodians.

- 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)
 - Emergency dental and optometry care services
 - Any entity providing ambulance services
 - Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
 - Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
-
- 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.
-
- 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).
-
- 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.
-
- 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.

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

social services to meet immediate needs, to be specified jointly by the Ministry of Social Development and Oranga Tamariki.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 7.30 pm, 26 March 2020

- **All supermarkets are considered an essential service**
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be

maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas

- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. However, as the deadline for domestic travel has been extended until midnight Friday 27 March, anyone in the process of moving house will need to complete their move before the end of Friday. Similarly, all furniture deliveries currently in transit would need to be also be delivered by the end of Friday
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
- **Dairies** can remain open, with a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food. [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)
- **Food delivery** is prohibited except for supermarket deliveries. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole-food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay)
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services. Please refer to [the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or visit <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/covid-19-essential-primary-sector-service-registration/>

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol and tobacco
- stationery

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

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A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

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What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

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During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

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Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

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I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

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Version: 127

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

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This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **7.30 pm, 26 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators,

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Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Social services

supervisors and custodians.

- 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)
 - Emergency dental and optometry care services
 - Any entity providing ambulance services
 - Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
 - Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
-
- 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.
-
- 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).
-
- 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.
-
- 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.

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

social services to meet immediate needs, to be specified jointly by the Ministry of Social Development and Oranga Tamariki.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 7.30 pm, 26 March 2020

- **All supermarkets are considered an essential service**
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be

maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas

- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. However, as the deadline for domestic travel has been extended until midnight Friday 27 March, anyone in the process of moving house will need to complete their move before the end of Friday. Similarly, all furniture deliveries currently in transit would need to be also be delivered by the end of Friday
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
- **Dairies** can remain open, with a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food. [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)
- **Food delivery** is prohibited except for supermarket deliveries. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole-food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay)
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services. Please refer to [the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol and tobacco
- stationery

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Liquor stores must close to the public unless they are in Licencing Trust areas. Open premises in Licencing Trust areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule. Liquor stores outside of Licencing Trust areas may not open premises to the public. **Liquor stores outside of Licensing Trust areas may not open to the public or deliver online.**

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 129

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **7.30 pm, 26 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators,

Reserve Bank of New Zealand

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Social services

supervisors and custodians.

- 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)
 - Emergency dental and optometry care services
 - Any entity providing ambulance services
 - Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
 - Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
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- 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.
-
- 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).
-
- 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.
-
- 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.

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

social services to meet immediate needs, to be specified jointly by the Ministry of Social Development and Oranga Tamariki.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 11am, 27 March 2020

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- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services. Please refer to [the Ministry of Transport website](#)
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For the avoidance of doubt, sectors and occupations specified in the following are also included in this list of essential services:

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Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

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The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol and tobacco
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

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Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Liquor stores must close to the public unless they are in Licencing Trust areas. Open premises in Licencing Trust areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule. Liquor stores outside of Licencing Trust areas may not open premises to the public. **Liquor stores outside of Licensing Trust areas may not open to the public or deliver online.**

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 131

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **7.30 pm, 26 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators,

Reserve Bank of New Zealand

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Social services

supervisors and custodians.

- 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)
 - Emergency dental and optometry care services
 - Any entity providing ambulance services
 - Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
 - Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
-
- 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.
-
- 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).
-
- 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.
-
- 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.

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

social services to meet immediate needs, to be specified jointly by the Ministry of Social Development and Oranga Tamariki.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 11am, 27 March 2020

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- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

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The list may be updated by the Government.

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My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
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Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

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What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

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Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

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Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol and tobacco
- stationery.

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I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Liquor stores must close to the public unless they are in Licencing Trust areas. Open premises in Licencing Trust areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule. Liquor stores outside of Licencing Trust areas may not open premises to the public. **Liquor stores outside of Licensing Trust areas may not open to the public or deliver online.**

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 133

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **7.30 pm, 26 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators,

Reserve Bank of New Zealand

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Social services

supervisors and custodians.

- 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)
 - Emergency dental and optometry care services
 - Any entity providing ambulance services
 - Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
 - Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
-
- 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.
-
- 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).
-
- 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.
-
- 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.

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

social services to meet immediate needs, to be specified jointly by the Ministry of Social Development and Oranga Tamariki.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 11am, 27 March 2020

- **All supermarkets are considered an essential service**
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Dairies** can remain open, with a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food. [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licencing Trust areas. Open premises in Licencing Trust areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule. Online stores can sell alcohol.

- **Food delivery** is prohibited except for supermarket deliveries. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole-food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay)
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. However, as the deadline for domestic travel has been extended until midnight Friday 27 March, anyone in the process of moving house will need to complete their move before the end of Friday. Similarly, all furniture deliveries currently in transit would need to be also be delivered by the end of Friday
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT and Payroll**
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services. Please refer to [the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0508 377 388 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at **0508 377 388** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

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It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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.
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- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

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There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

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Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

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If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

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Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol and tobacco
- stationery.

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Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

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Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

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Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Liquor stores must close to the public unless they are in Licencing Trust areas. Open premises in Licencing Trust areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule. Liquor stores outside of Licencing Trust areas may not open premises to the public. **Liquor stores outside of Licensing Trust areas may not open to the public or deliver online.**

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

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Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 135

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **7.30 pm, 26 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators,

Reserve Bank of New Zealand

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Social services

supervisors and custodians.

- 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)
 - Emergency dental and optometry care services
 - Any entity providing ambulance services
 - Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
 - Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
-
- 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.
-
- 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).
-
- 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.
-
- 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.

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

social services to meet immediate needs, to be specified jointly by the Ministry of Social Development and Oranga Tamariki.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 11am, 27 March 2020

- **All supermarkets are considered an essential service**
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Dairies** can remain open, with a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food. [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licencing Trust areas. Open premises in Licencing Trust areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule. Online stores can sell alcohol.

- **Food delivery** is prohibited except for supermarket deliveries. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole-food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay)
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. However, as the deadline for domestic travel has been extended until midnight Friday 27 March, anyone in the process of moving house will need to complete their move before the end of Friday. Similarly, all furniture deliveries currently in transit would need to be also be delivered by the end of Friday
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT and Payroll**
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services. Please refer to [the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol and tobacco
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

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Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

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Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

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Why is alcohol considered essential?

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Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

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I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

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Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

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Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

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The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **7.30 pm, 26 March 2020**.

Sectors	Entities providing essential services (including their supply chains)
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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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators,

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Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Social services

supervisors and custodians.

- 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)
 - Emergency dental and optometry care services
 - Any entity providing ambulance services
 - Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
 - Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
-
- 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.
-
- 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).
-
- 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.
-
- 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.

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

social services to meet immediate needs, to be specified jointly by the Ministry of Social Development and Oranga Tamariki.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 11am, 27 March 2020

- **All supermarkets are considered an essential service**
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Dairies** can remain open, with a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food. [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licencing Trust areas. Open premises in Licencing Trust areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule. Online stores can sell alcohol.

- **Food delivery** is prohibited except for supermarket deliveries. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole-food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay)
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. However, as the deadline for domestic travel has been extended until midnight Friday 27 March, anyone in the process of moving house will need to complete their move before the end of Friday. Similarly, all furniture deliveries currently in transit would need to be also be delivered by the end of Friday
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT and Payroll**
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services. Please refer to [the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol and tobacco
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licencing Trust areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other Liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 139

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **7.30 pm, 26 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators,

Reserve Bank of New Zealand

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

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Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Social services

supervisors and custodians.

- 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)
 - Emergency dental and optometry care services
 - Any entity providing ambulance services
 - Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
 - Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
-
- 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.
-
- 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).
-
- 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.
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- 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
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social services to meet immediate needs, to be specified jointly by the Ministry of Social Development and Oranga Tamariki.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 11am, 27 March 2020

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- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
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- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licencing Trust areas. Open premises in Licencing Trust areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule. Online stores can sell alcohol.

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- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
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- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT and Payroll**
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services. Please refer to [the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling 0800 22 66 57 (9 am to 5 pm).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
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- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol and tobacco
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

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Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licencing Trust areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other Liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 141

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **7.30 pm, 26 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators,

Reserve Bank of New Zealand

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Social services

supervisors and custodians.

- 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)
 - Emergency dental and optometry care services
 - Any entity providing ambulance services
 - Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
 - Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
-
- 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.
-
- 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).
-
- 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.
-
- 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.

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

social services to meet immediate needs, to be specified jointly by the Ministry of Social Development and Oranga Tamariki.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 11am, 27 March 2020

- **All supermarkets are considered an essential service**
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Dairies** can remain open, with a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food. [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licencing Trust areas. Open premises in Licencing Trust areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule. Online stores can sell alcohol.

- **Food delivery** is prohibited except for supermarket deliveries. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole-food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay)
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- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced
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Contact us

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What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

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If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

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- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
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The list may be updated by the Government.

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My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
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- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping
- stationery.

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I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other Liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 143

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **7.30 pm, 26 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators,

Reserve Bank of New Zealand

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Social services

supervisors and custodians.

- 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)
 - Emergency dental and optometry care services
 - Any entity providing ambulance services
 - Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
 - Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
-
- 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.
-
- 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).
-
- 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.
-
- 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.

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

social services to meet immediate needs, to be specified jointly by the Ministry of Social Development and Oranga Tamariki.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 11am, 27 March 2020

- **All supermarkets are considered an essential service**
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Dairies** can remain open, with a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food. [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licencing Trust areas. Open premises in Licencing Trust areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.

- **Food delivery** is prohibited except for supermarket deliveries. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole-food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay)
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. However, as the deadline for domestic travel has been extended until midnight Friday 27 March, anyone in the process of moving house will need to complete their move before the end of Friday. Similarly, all furniture deliveries currently in transit would need to be also be delivered by the end of Friday
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT and Payroll**
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services. Please refer to [the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

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My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
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- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

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It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
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Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

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If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

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Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol and tobacco
- stationery.

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What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

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I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

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Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other Liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in licencing trust areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 146

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **10.05 am, 28 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators,

Reserve Bank of New Zealand

supervisors and custodians.

[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

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.

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.

[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 10.05am, 28 March 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food product, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and

cannot sell cooked food. [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)

- **Multi-product retailers** that supplies food and beverage as an ancillary service is not an essential service (e.g Warehouse)
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered essential services and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements e.g washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licencing Trust areas. Open premises in Licencing Trust areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Food delivery** is prohibited except for supermarket deliveries. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole-food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay)
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. However, as the deadline for domestic travel has been extended until midnight Friday 27 March, anyone in the process of moving house will need to complete their move before the end of Friday. Similarly, all furniture deliveries currently in transit would need to be also be delivered by the end of Friday
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services. Please refer to [the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**

- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies

- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

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A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

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Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good.

Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other Liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

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Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

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Content type: *Standard page content*

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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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

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If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **10.05 am, 28 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators,

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supervisors and custodians.

[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

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.

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.

[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 10.05am, 28 March 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food product, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and

cannot sell cooked food. [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)

- **Multi-product retailers** that supplies food and beverage as an ancillary service is not an essential service (e.g Warehouse)
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered essential services and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements e.g washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Food delivery** is prohibited except for supermarket deliveries. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole-food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay)
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. However, as the deadline for domestic travel has been extended until midnight Friday 27 March, anyone in the process of moving house will need to complete their move before the end of Friday. Similarly, all furniture deliveries currently in transit would need to be also be delivered by the end of Friday
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services. Please refer to [the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**

- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies

- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good.

Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 151

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **10.05 am, 28 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators,

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supervisors and custodians.

[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

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.

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.

[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 10.05am, 28 March 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food product, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and

cannot sell cooked food. [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)

- **Multi-product retailers** that supplies food and beverage as an ancillary service is not an essential service (eg Warehouse)
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered essential services and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Food delivery** is prohibited except for supermarket deliveries. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole-food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay)
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. However, as the deadline for domestic travel has been extended until midnight Friday 27 March, anyone in the process of moving house will need to complete their move before the end of Friday. Similarly, all furniture deliveries currently in transit would need to be also be delivered by the end of Friday
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services. Please refer to [the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**

- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies

- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good.

Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 164

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **10.05 am, 28 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators,

Reserve Bank of New Zealand

supervisors and custodians.

[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- 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.
- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- [Customs New Zealand advice on essential and non-essential goods](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

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- **Multi-product retailers** that supplies food and beverage as an ancillary service is not an essential service (eg Warehouse)
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered essential services and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the Liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Food is an essential.** Online delivery of food other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole-food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay). Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
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- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. However, as the deadline for domestic travel has been extended until midnight Friday 27 March, anyone in the process of moving house will need to complete their move before the end of Friday. Similarly, all furniture deliveries currently in transit would need to be also be delivered by the end of Friday
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services. Please refer to [the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

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Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 167

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **6.00 pm, 28 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators,

Reserve Bank of New Zealand

supervisors and custodians.

[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- 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.
- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- [Customs New Zealand advice on essential and non-essential goods](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 10.05am, 28 March 2020

All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services. A supermarket's primary focus is selling food product, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food. [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)

- **Online food delivery.** Online delivery of food other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole-food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay). Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Multi-product retailers** that supplies food and beverage as an ancillary service is not an essential service (eg Warehouse)
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered essential services and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the Liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Food is an essential.** Online delivery of food other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole-food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay). Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. However, as the deadline for domestic travel has been extended until midnight Friday 27 March, anyone in the process of moving house will need to complete their move before the end of Friday. Similarly, all furniture deliveries currently in transit would need to be also be delivered by the end of Friday
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services. Please refer to [the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced

- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

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What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

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Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the

guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical

care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 169

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **6.00 pm, 28 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<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 facilityAny 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators,

Reserve Bank of New Zealand

supervisors and custodians.

[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and

- 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

Employment

- 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- 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.
- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- [Customs New Zealand advice on essential and non-essential goods](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 10.05am, 28 March 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food product, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food. [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Online food delivery.** Online delivery of food other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole-food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay). Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Multi-product retailers** that supplies food and beverage as an ancillary service is not an essential service (eg Warehouse)
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered essential services and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the Liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Food is an essential.** Online delivery of food other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole-food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay). Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. However, as the deadline for domestic travel has been extended until midnight Friday 27 March, anyone in the process of moving house will need to complete their move before the end of Friday. Similarly, all furniture deliveries currently in transit would need to be also be delivered by the end of Friday
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**

- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services. Please refer to [the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must

- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

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My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
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At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

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Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers

- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 171

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **6.00 pm, 28 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	At Alert Level 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT)
	At Alert Level 3 only: <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 facilityAny 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

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.

[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.
- 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

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- 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.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- [Customs New Zealand advice on essential and non-essential goods](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.
- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry

for Culture and Heritage
(for broadcasting)

Any entity supplying services to an essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services)

- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 10.05am, 28 March 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food product, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food. [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Online food delivery.** Online delivery of food other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole-food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay). Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Multi-product retailers** that supplies food and beverage as an ancillary service is not an essential service (eg Warehouse)
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered essential services and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the Liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Food is an essential.** Online delivery of food other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole-food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay). Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. However, as the deadline for domestic travel has been extended until midnight Friday 27 March, anyone in the process of moving house will need to complete their move before the end of Friday. Similarly, all furniture deliveries currently in transit would need to be also be delivered by the end of Friday
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for

a non-essential service

- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services. Please refer to [the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All

essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long

as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how man manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required you to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and

distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

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I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working.

This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

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If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

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We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

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Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

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Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

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Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 175

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **6.00 pm, 28 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<p>At Alert Level 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT) <p>At Alert Level 3 only:</p> <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 facilityAny 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

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.

[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.
- 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

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- 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.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- [Customs New Zealand advice on essential and non-essential goods](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.
- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry

for Culture and Heritage
(for broadcasting)

Any entity supplying services to an essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services)

- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 10.05am, 28 March 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food product, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food.
[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Online food delivery.** Online delivery of food other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole-food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay). Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Multi-product retailers** that supplies food and beverage as an ancillary service is not an essential service (eg Warehouse)
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered essential services and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the Liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. However, as the deadline for domestic travel has been extended until midnight Friday 27 March, anyone in the process of moving house will need to complete their move before the end of Friday. Similarly, all furniture deliveries currently in transit would need to be also be delivered by the end of Friday
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be

essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**

- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services.

[Please refer to the Ministry of Transport website](#)

- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you

and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee social distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this

period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

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Version: 177

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **6.00 pm, 28 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	At Alert Level 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT)
	At Alert Level 3 only: <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 facilityAny 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

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.

[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.
- 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

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- 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.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- [Customs New Zealand advice on essential and non-essential goods](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.
- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry

for Culture and Heritage
(for broadcasting)

Any entity supplying services to an essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services)

- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 10.05am, 28 March 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food product, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food.
[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Online food delivery.** Online delivery of food other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed. Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may operate and whole-food delivery may continue to operate (eg subscription food boxes are okay). Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Multi-product retailers** that supplies food and beverage as an ancillary service is not an essential service (eg Warehouse)
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered essential services and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the Liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. However, as the deadline for domestic travel has been extended until midnight Friday 27 March, anyone in the process of moving house will need to complete their move before the end of Friday. Similarly, all furniture deliveries currently in transit would need to be also be delivered by the end of Friday
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be

essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**

- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services.
[Please refer to the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you

and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee physical distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this

period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 183

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **6.00 pm, 28 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<p>At Alert Level 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT) <p>At Alert Level 3 only:</p> <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 facilityAny 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

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.
[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.
- 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

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- 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.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- [Customs New Zealand advice on essential and non-essential goods](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.
- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry

for Culture and Heritage
(for broadcasting)

Any entity supplying services to an essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services)

- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 2.00 pm, 29 March 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food product, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food.
[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Food delivery** other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed (eg supermarket home delivery, food parcels from charitable organisations, subscription food boxes, or any other whole-food delivery service). Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may continue to deliver prepared food. Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Food banks** are considered an essential social service. Food banks must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell or provide cooked food.
- **Multi-product retailers** that supplies food and beverage as an ancillary service is not an essential service (eg Warehouse)
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered essential services and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the Liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. However, as the deadline for domestic travel has been extended until midnight Friday 27 March, anyone in the process of moving house will need to complete their move before the end of Friday. Similarly, all furniture deliveries currently in transit would need to be also be delivered by the end of Friday
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are

- considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
 - **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services.
[Please refer to the Ministry of Transport website](#)
 - Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
 - **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced
 - **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required you to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For

example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that

you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee physical distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 187

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **6.00 pm, 28 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<p>At Alert Level 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT) <p>At Alert Level 3 only:</p> <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 facilityAny 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

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.
[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.
- 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

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- 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.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
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- 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.
- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
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- 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

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry

for Culture and Heritage
(for broadcasting)

Any entity supplying services to an essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services)

- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 2.00 pm, 29 March 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food product, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food.
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- **Food delivery** other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed (eg supermarket home delivery, food parcels from charitable organisations, subscription food boxes, or any other whole-food delivery service). Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may continue to deliver prepared food. Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
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- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered essential services and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. However, as the deadline for domestic travel has been extended until midnight Friday 27 March, anyone in the process of moving house will need to complete their move before the end of Friday. Similarly, all furniture deliveries currently in transit would need to be also be delivered by the end of Friday
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges

- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services.
[Please refer to the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with

through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee physical distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are

essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 189

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **6.00 pm, 28 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	At Alert Level 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT)
	At Alert Level 3 only: <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 facilityAny 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

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.

[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.
- 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

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- 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.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- [Customs New Zealand advice on essential and non-essential goods](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.
- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry

for Culture and Heritage
(for broadcasting)

Any entity supplying services to an essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services)

- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 2.00 pm, 29 March 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food product, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food.
[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Food delivery** other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed (eg supermarket home delivery, food parcels from charitable organisations, subscription food boxes, or any other whole-food delivery service). Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may continue to deliver prepared food. Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Food banks** are considered an essential social service. Food banks must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell or provide cooked food.
- **Multi-product retailers** that supply food and beverage as an ancillary service are not an essential service (eg The Warehouse).
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered an essential service and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
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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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

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What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.
- [You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page.](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required you to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with

through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee physical distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are

essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 191

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and eftpos terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website)
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **6.00 pm, 28 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 housingRetirement villages.Backpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	At Alert Level 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT)
	At Alert Level 3 only: <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 facilityAny 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

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.

[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.
- 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

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- 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.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- [Customs New Zealand advice on essential and non-essential goods](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.
- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, waste water (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry

for Culture and Heritage
(for broadcasting)

Any entity supplying services to an essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services)

- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 2.00 pm, 29 March 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food product, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food.
[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Food delivery** other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed (eg supermarket home delivery, food parcels from charitable organisations, subscription food boxes, or any other whole-food delivery service). Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may continue to deliver prepared food. Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Food banks** are considered an essential social service. Food banks must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell or provide cooked food.
- **Multi-product retailers** that supply food and beverage as an ancillary service are not an essential service (eg The Warehouse).
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered an essential service and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available.
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated.
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets.
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. However, as the deadline for domestic travel has been extended until midnight Friday 27 March, anyone in the process of moving house will need to complete their move before the end of Friday. Similarly, all furniture deliveries currently in transit would need to be also be delivered by the end of Friday.
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential.
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges.

- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**.
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services.
[Please refer to the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation.
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced.
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (9 am to 5 pm).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team at 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as it is done in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we're at Alert Level 4.

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Do I need to shut my business if it isn't on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, we ask you to close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but isn't on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For

example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you are a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we're at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food,
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how they continue their operations: they will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that

you're given, to stay safe and to make sure you don't risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role e.g. business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one in, one out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee physical distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and rideshare drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and rideshare drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page.](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 212

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (8 am to 8 pm, Monday-Friday).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **4.30 pm, 30 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 housingRetirement villagesBackpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<p>At Alert Level 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT) <p>At Alert Level 3 only:</p> <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 facilityAny 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

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.
[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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.
- 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

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- 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.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- [Customs New Zealand advice on essential and non-essential goods](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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 that 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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

for Culture and Heritage
(for broadcasting)

Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services)

- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 4.30 pm, 30 March 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food products, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food.
[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Essential consumer products other than food** may be provided subject to conditions. If a business cannot meet these conditions, it must not offer goods for sale during the Alert Level 4 period.
[See below for details](#)
- **Food delivery** other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed (eg supermarket home delivery, food parcels from charitable organisations, subscription food boxes, or any other whole-food delivery service). Meals-on-Wheels and alternative meals on wheels services that have been referred from a DHB, ACC or MSD may continue to deliver prepared food. Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Food banks** are considered an essential social service. Food banks must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell or provide cooked food.
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered an essential service and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements. Eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available.
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated.
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets.
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. Anyone who was moving house before Alert Level 4 had until the end of Friday 27 March to complete their move.
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential.
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only. Eg fridges.

- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**.
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services.
[Please refer to the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation.
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced.
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (8 am to 8 pm, Monday-Friday).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

In order to provide essential non-food consumer products, businesses must comply with the following conditions:

1. Orders must be taken online or by phone only. Storefronts must not be open and the public should not be able to

- visit stores to select or collect goods.
2. Orders must be for only essential non-food consumer products.
 3. In fulfilling orders, businesses must take all appropriate public health measures (e.g. physical distancing, hygiene basics, appropriate personal protective equipment for staff).
 4. Orders must be home delivered in a contactless way (i.e. there is no physical interaction between the deliverer and customer).
 5. The business must inform MBIE of its intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, and provide a list of the products they intend to offer. (See below for more information on how to do this.)

If businesses cannot meet any of the above conditions, they should not offer to sell essential goods while the country is at Alert Level 4.

This gives households access to necessities to safely isolate, stay connected, and to work or study from home during a period of Alert Level 4 restrictions. Allowing the purchase of essential products only minimises the risk to public health by reducing pressure on the distribution system and reducing movement and physical interaction between people.

It is difficult to be prescriptive about what an essential product is. We expect that essential goods cover those products that keep people warm, replace key household appliances, and maintain people's health. They may include for example blankets, heaters, kitchenware and appliances, whiteware, computer equipment, and mobile phones.

Businesses will need to form a judgment as to which of their products are genuinely essential. We expect businesses and households to act responsibly when they decide what these essential goods might be.

New Zealanders are relying on each other to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. We expect businesses to minimise their product offerings and households to only order goods that are absolutely necessary. If businesses are too generous in their interpretation of what is essential or flout these rules, Government will take further action.

MBIE must be notified before you commence selling essential non-food products.

Businesses operating online, by phone, or via other contactless means are not visible in the same way as a shop on the street. To have visibility of the extent of activity, MBIE is asking businesses to let it know they are operating and what essential products they are offering.

MBIE is currently establishing a register to collect this information. This will be available on Tuesday 31 March.

If you wish to pre-register immediately, you can email essentialgoods@mbie.govt.nz with the following information:

- Business name
- Business website (if offering goods online)
- Contact phone number
- New Zealand Business Number (NZBN)
- Business service address
- List of products to be offered online (by type)

If you pre-register by email, MBIE will still require you to formally register once the MBIE register is live.

This email address is for informing MBIE of your intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, it is not for general enquiries. If you have questions please contact MBIE via its [general enquiries email](#).

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring **0800 22 66 57** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz (8 am to 8 pm, Monday-Friday).

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with MBIE at 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz (8 am to 8 pm, Monday-Friday).

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as you do it in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we are at Alert Level 4.

[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it is not on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff. Eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers. Eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you must close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but is not on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz (8 am to 8 pm, Monday-Friday).

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

[Find out more about the Ministry for Primary Industries business register below.](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you work for a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we are at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how it will continue its operations: it will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you are given, to stay safe and to make sure you do not risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you

and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role. Eg business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one-in-one-out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee physical distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this

period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and ride-share drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and ride-share drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty-free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 216

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (8 am to 8 pm, Monday-Friday).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **4.30 pm, 30 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 housingRetirement villagesBackpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<p>At Alert Level 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT) <p>At Alert Level 3 only:</p> <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 facilityAny 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

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.
[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Courts of New Zealand
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.
- 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

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- 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.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- [Customs New Zealand advice on essential and non-essential goods](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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 that 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.
- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry

for Culture and Heritage
(for broadcasting)

Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services)

- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 4.30 pm, 30 March 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food products, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food.
[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Essential consumer products other than food** may be provided subject to conditions. If a business cannot meet these conditions, it must not offer goods for sale during the Alert Level 4 period.
[See below for details](#)
- **Food delivery** other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed (eg supermarket home delivery, food parcels from charitable organisations, subscription food boxes, or any other whole-food delivery service). Meals-on-Wheels may continue to deliver prepared food. Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Food banks** are considered an essential social service. Food banks must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell or provide cooked food.
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered an essential service and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements. Eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available.
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated.
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets.
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. Anyone who was moving house before Alert Level 4 had until the end of Friday 27 March to complete their move.
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential.
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only. Eg fridges.
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be

essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**.

- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services.
[Please refer to the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation.
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced.
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (8 am to 8 pm, Monday-Friday).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

In order to provide essential non-food consumer products, businesses must comply with the following conditions:

1. Orders must be taken online or by phone only. Storefronts must not be open and the public should not be able to visit stores to select or collect goods.

2. Orders must be for only essential non-food consumer products.
3. In fulfilling orders, businesses must take all appropriate public health measures (e.g. physical distancing, hygiene basics, appropriate personal protective equipment for staff).
4. Orders must be home delivered in a contactless way (i.e. there is no physical interaction between the deliverer and customer).
5. The business must inform MBIE of its intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, and provide a list of the products they intend to offer. (See below for more information on how to do this.)

If businesses cannot meet any of the above conditions, they should not offer to sell essential goods while the country is at Alert Level 4.

This gives households access to necessities to safely isolate, stay connected, and to work or study from home during a period of Alert Level 4 restrictions. Allowing the purchase of essential products only minimises the risk to public health by reducing pressure on the distribution system and reducing movement and physical interaction between people.

It is difficult to be prescriptive about what an essential product is. We expect that essential goods cover those products that keep people warm, replace key household appliances, and maintain people's health. They may include for example blankets, heaters, kitchenware and appliances, whiteware, computer equipment, and mobile phones.

Businesses will need to form a judgment as to which of their products are genuinely essential. We expect businesses and households to act responsibly when they decide what these essential goods might be.

New Zealanders are relying on each other to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. We expect businesses to minimise their product offerings and households to only order goods that are absolutely necessary. If businesses are too generous in their interpretation of what is essential or flout these rules, Government will take further action.

MBIE must be notified before you commence selling essential non-food products.

Businesses operating online, by phone, or via other contactless means are not visible in the same way as a shop on the street. To have visibility of the extent of activity, MBIE is asking businesses to let it know they are operating and what essential products they are offering.

MBIE is currently establishing a register to collect this information. This will be available on Tuesday 31 March.

If you wish to pre-register immediately, you can email essentialgoods@mbie.govt.nz with the following information:

- Business name
- Business website (if offering goods online)
- Contact phone number
- New Zealand Business Number (NZBN)
- Business service address
- List of products to be offered online (by type)

If you pre-register by email, MBIE will still require you to formally register once the MBIE register is live.

This email address is for informing MBIE of your intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, it is not for general enquiries. If you have questions please contact MBIE via its [general enquiries email](#).

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All

essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring **0800 22 66 57** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz (8 am to 8 pm, Monday-Friday).

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with MBIE at 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz (8 am to 8 pm, Monday-Friday).

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as you do it in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we are at Alert Level 4.

[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it is not on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff. Eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers. Eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you must close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but is not on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz (8 am to 8 pm, Monday-Friday).

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

[Find out more about the Ministry for Primary Industries business register below.](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you work for a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we are at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how it will continue its operations: it will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you are given, to stay safe and to make sure you do not risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role. Eg business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one-in-one-out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee physical distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and ride-share drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and ride-share drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty-free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 218

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call **0800 22 66 57** (8 am to 8 pm, Monday-Friday).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call **0800 00 83 33**.

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **4.30 pm, 30 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 housingRetirement villagesBackpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<p>At Alert Level 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT) <p>At Alert Level 3 only:</p> <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 facilityAny 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

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.
[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Courts of New Zealand
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.
- 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

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- 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.
[Find out what qualifies as an essential social service on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- [Customs New Zealand advice on essential and non-essential goods](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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 that 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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 essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 4.30 pm, 30 March 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food products, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food.
[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Essential consumer products other than food** may be provided subject to conditions. If a business cannot meet these conditions, it must not offer goods for sale during the Alert Level 4 period.
[See below for details](#)
- **Food delivery** other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed (eg supermarket home delivery, food parcels from charitable organisations, subscription food boxes, or any other whole-food delivery service). Meals-on-Wheels may continue to deliver prepared food. Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Food banks** are considered an essential social service. Food banks must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell or provide cooked food.
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered an essential service and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements. Eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available.
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated.
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets.
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. Anyone who was moving house before Alert Level 4 had until the end of Friday 27 March to complete their move.
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential.
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only. Eg fridges.

- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**.
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services.
[Please refer to the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation.
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced.
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (8 am to 8 pm, Monday-Friday).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

In order to provide essential non-food consumer products, businesses must comply with the following conditions:

1. Orders must be taken online or by phone only. Storefronts must not be open and the public should not be able to

- visit stores to select or collect goods.
2. Orders must be for only essential non-food consumer products.
 3. In fulfilling orders, businesses must take all appropriate public health measures (e.g. physical distancing, hygiene basics, appropriate personal protective equipment for staff).
 4. Orders must be home delivered in a contactless way (i.e. there is no physical interaction between the deliverer and customer).
 5. The business must inform MBIE of its intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, and provide a list of the products they intend to offer. (See below for more information on how to do this.)

If businesses cannot meet any of the above conditions, they should not offer to sell essential goods while the country is at Alert Level 4.

This gives households access to necessities to safely isolate, stay connected, and to work or study from home during a period of Alert Level 4 restrictions. Allowing the purchase of essential products only minimises the risk to public health by reducing pressure on the distribution system and reducing movement and physical interaction between people.

It is difficult to be prescriptive about what an essential product is. We expect that essential goods cover those products that keep people warm, replace key household appliances, and maintain people's health. They may include for example blankets, heaters, kitchenware and appliances, whiteware, computer equipment, and mobile phones.

Businesses will need to form a judgment as to which of their products are genuinely essential. We expect businesses and households to act responsibly when they decide what these essential goods might be.

New Zealanders are relying on each other to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. We expect businesses to minimise their product offerings and households to only order goods that are absolutely necessary. If businesses are too generous in their interpretation of what is essential or flout these rules, Government will take further action.

MBIE must be notified before you commence selling essential non-food products.

Businesses operating online, by phone, or via other contactless means are not visible in the same way as a shop on the street. To have visibility of the extent of activity, MBIE is asking businesses to let it know they are operating and what essential products they are offering.

MBIE is currently establishing a register to collect this information. This will be available on Tuesday 31 March.

If you wish to pre-register immediately, you can email essentialgoods@mbie.govt.nz with the following information:

- Business name
- Business website (if offering goods online)
- Contact phone number
- New Zealand Business Number (NZBN)
- Business service address
- List of products to be offered online (by type)

If you pre-register by email, MBIE will still require you to formally register once the MBIE register is live.

This email address is for informing MBIE of your intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, it is not for general enquiries. If you have questions please contact MBIE via its [general enquiries email](#).

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring **0800 22 66 57** or email essential@mbie.govt.nz (8 am to 8 pm, Monday-Friday).

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): **0800 300 362**
- Central Region (Business Central): **0800 800 362**
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: **0800 50 50 96**
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: **0508 656 757**

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with MBIE at 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz (8 am to 8 pm, Monday-Friday).

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as you do it in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we are at Alert Level 4.

[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it is not on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff. Eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers. Eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you must close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but is not on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, ring 0800 22 66 57 or email essential@mbie.govt.nz (8 am to 8 pm, Monday-Friday).

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

[Find out more about the Ministry for Primary Industries business register below.](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you work for a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we are at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at 0800 00 83 33 or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how it will continue its operations: it will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you are given, to stay safe and to make sure you do not risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you

and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role. Eg business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one-in-one-out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee physical distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this

period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and ride-share drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces; and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and ride-share drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty-free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 220

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you are unsure if your business is considered essential, email essential@mbie.govt.nz or call [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) (8 am to 8 pm, Monday-Friday).

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **4.30 pm, 30 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 housingRetirement villagesBackpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<p>At Alert Level 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT) <p>At Alert Level 3 only:</p> <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 facilityAny 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

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.
[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Courts of New Zealand
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.
- 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

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- 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.
[Find out what qualifies as an essential social service on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- [Customs New Zealand advice on essential and non-essential goods](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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 that 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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 essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 4.30 pm, 30 March 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food products, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food.
[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Essential consumer products other than food** may be provided subject to conditions. If a business cannot meet these conditions, it must not offer goods for sale during the Alert Level 4 period.
[See below for details](#)
- **Food delivery** other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed (eg supermarket home delivery, food parcels from charitable organisations, subscription food boxes, or any other whole-food delivery service). Meals-on-Wheels may continue to deliver prepared food. Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Food banks** are considered an essential social service. Food banks must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell or provide cooked food.
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered an essential service and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements. Eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available.
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated.
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets.
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. Anyone who was moving house before Alert Level 4 had until the end of Friday 27 March to complete their move.
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential.
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only. Eg fridges.

- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**.
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services.
[Please refer to the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation.
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced.
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with our team by emailing essential@mbie.govt.nz or calling **0800 22 66 57** (8 am to 8 pm, Monday-Friday).

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

In order to provide essential non-food consumer products, businesses must comply with the following conditions:

1. Orders must be taken online or by phone only. Storefronts must not be open and the public should not be able to

- visit stores to select or collect goods.
2. Orders must be for only essential non-food consumer products.
 3. In fulfilling orders, businesses must take all appropriate public health measures (e.g. physical distancing, hygiene basics, appropriate personal protective equipment for staff).
 4. Orders must be home delivered in a contactless way (i.e. there is no physical interaction between the deliverer and customer).
 5. The business must inform MBIE of its intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, and provide a list of the products they intend to offer. (See below for more information on how to do this.)

If businesses cannot meet any of the above conditions, they should not offer to sell essential goods while the country is at Alert Level 4.

This gives households access to necessities to safely isolate, stay connected, and to work or study from home during a period of Alert Level 4 restrictions. Allowing the purchase of essential products only minimises the risk to public health by reducing pressure on the distribution system and reducing movement and physical interaction between people.

It is difficult to be prescriptive about what an essential product is. We expect that essential goods cover those products that keep people warm, replace key household appliances, and maintain people's health. They may include for example blankets, heaters, kitchenware and appliances, whiteware, computer equipment, and mobile phones.

Businesses will need to form a judgment as to which of their products are genuinely essential. We expect businesses and households to act responsibly when they decide what these essential goods might be.

New Zealanders are relying on each other to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. We expect businesses to minimise their product offerings and households to only order goods that are absolutely necessary. If businesses are too generous in their interpretation of what is essential or flout these rules, Government will take further action.

MBIE must be notified before you commence selling essential non-food products.

Businesses operating online, by phone, or via other contactless means are not visible in the same way as a shop on the street. To have visibility of the extent of activity, MBIE is asking businesses to let it know they are operating and what essential products they are offering.

MBIE is currently establishing a register to collect this information. This will be available on Tuesday 31 March.

If you wish to pre-register immediately, you can email essentialgoods@mbie.govt.nz with the following information:

- Business name
- Business website (if offering goods online)
- Contact phone number
- New Zealand Business Number (NZBN)
- Business service address
- List of products to be offered online (by type)

If you pre-register by email, MBIE will still require you to formally register once the MBIE register is live.

This email address is for informing MBIE of your intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, it is not for general enquiries. If you have questions please contact MBIE via its [general enquiries email](#).

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you are unsure if your business is an essential service, you can ring [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz (8 am to 8 pm, Monday-Friday).

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): [0800 300 362](tel:0800300362)
- Central Region (Business Central): [0800 800 362](tel:0800800362)
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: [0800 50 50 96](tel:0800505096)
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: [0508 656 757](tel:0508656757)

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries around essential services you can get in touch with MBIE at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz (8 am to 8 pm, Monday-Friday).

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as you do it in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we are at Alert Level 4.

[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it is not on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff. Eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers. Eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you must close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but is not on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you think your business should be an essential service, call [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz (8 am to 8 pm, Monday-Friday).

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

[Find out more about the Ministry for Primary Industries business register below.](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you work for a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we are at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333) or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how it will continue its operations: it will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you are given, to stay safe and to make sure you do not risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you

and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role. Eg business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one-in-one-out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee physical distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this

period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and ride-share drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces, and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and ride-share drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty-free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 222

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **4.30 pm, 30 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 housingRetirement villagesBackpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<p>At Alert Level 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT) <p>At Alert Level 3 only:</p> <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 facilityAny 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

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.
[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Courts of New Zealand
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.
- 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

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- 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.
[Find out what qualifies as an essential social service on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- [Customs New Zealand advice on essential and non-essential goods](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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 that 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.
- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- News (including news production) and broadcast media
- Internet service providers
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and

communications, including supply chains

- Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 4.30 pm, 30 March 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food products, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food.
[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Essential consumer products other than food** may be provided subject to conditions. If a business cannot meet these conditions, it must not offer goods for sale during the Alert Level 4 period.
[See below for details](#)
- **Food delivery** other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed (eg supermarket home delivery, food parcels from charitable organisations, subscription food boxes, or any other whole-food delivery service). Meals-on-Wheels may continue to deliver prepared food. Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Food banks** are considered an essential social service. Food banks must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell or provide cooked food.
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered an essential service and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements. Eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available.
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated.
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets.
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. Anyone who was moving house before Alert Level 4 had until the end of Friday 27 March to complete their move.
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential.
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only. Eg fridges.

- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**.
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services.
[Please refer to the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation.
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced.
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

In order to provide essential non-food consumer products, businesses must comply with the following conditions:

1. Orders must be taken online or by phone only. Storefronts must not be open and the public should not be able to

- visit stores to select or collect goods.
2. Orders must be for only essential non-food consumer products.
 3. In fulfilling orders, businesses must take all appropriate public health measures (e.g. physical distancing, hygiene basics, appropriate personal protective equipment for staff).
 4. Orders must be home delivered in a contactless way (i.e. there is no physical interaction between the deliverer and customer).
 5. The business must inform MBIE of its intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, and provide a list of the products they intend to offer. (See below for more information on how to do this.)

If businesses cannot meet any of the above conditions, they should not offer to sell essential goods while the country is at Alert Level 4.

This gives households access to necessities to safely isolate, stay connected, and to work or study from home during a period of Alert Level 4 restrictions. Allowing the purchase of essential products only minimises the risk to public health by reducing pressure on the distribution system and reducing movement and physical interaction between people.

It is difficult to be prescriptive about what an essential product is. We expect that essential goods cover those products that keep people warm, replace key household appliances, and maintain people's health. They may include for example blankets, heaters, kitchenware and appliances, whiteware, computer equipment, and mobile phones.

Businesses will need to form a judgment as to which of their products are genuinely essential. We expect businesses and households to act responsibly when they decide what these essential goods might be.

New Zealanders are relying on each other to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. We expect businesses to minimise their product offerings and households to only order goods that are absolutely necessary. If businesses are too generous in their interpretation of what is essential or flout these rules, Government will take further action.

MBIE must be notified before you commence selling essential non-food products.

Businesses operating online, by phone, or via other contactless means are not visible in the same way as a shop on the street. To have visibility of the extent of activity, MBIE is asking businesses to let it know they are operating and what essential products they are offering.

MBIE is currently establishing a register to collect this information. This will be available on Tuesday 31 March.

If you wish to pre-register immediately, you can email essentialgoods@mbie.govt.nz with the following information:

- Business name
- Business website (if offering goods online)
- Contact phone number
- New Zealand Business Number (NZBN)
- Business service address
- List of products to be offered online (by type)

If you pre-register by email, MBIE will still require you to formally register once the MBIE register is live.

This email address is for informing MBIE of your intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, it is not for general enquiries. If you have questions please contact MBIE via its [general enquiries email](#).

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): [0800 300 362](tel:0800300362)
- Central Region (Business Central): [0800 800 362](tel:0800800362)
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: [0800 50 50 96](tel:0800505096)
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: [0508 656 757](tel:0508656757)

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as you do it in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we are at Alert Level 4.

[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it is not on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff. Eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers. Eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you must close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but is not on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

[Find out more about the Ministry for Primary Industries business register below.](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you work for a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we are at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand, and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333) or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how it will continue its operations: it will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you are given, to stay safe and to make sure you do not risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you

and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role. Eg business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one-in-one-out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee physical distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this

period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and ride-share drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces, and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and ride-share drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty-free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 225

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **4.30pm, 30 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 housingRetirement villagesBackpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 4:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT)
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Fast-moving consumer goods Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment	<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 facilityAny entity supplying educational facilities or educational materials (eg printers)
Financial services	<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.Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services,

Lead agencies: Financial Markets Authority and Reserve Bank of New Zealand

payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.

[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Courts of New Zealand
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Science

- 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

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- 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.

- 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.

[Find out what qualifies as an essential social service on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.

[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)

- [Customs New Zealand advice on essential and non-essential goods](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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 that 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- 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 essential workplaces that are required for the safe

(for broadcasting)

- operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 4.30pm, 30 March 2020

- All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food products, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food.
[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- Essential consumer products other than food** may be provided subject to conditions. If a business cannot meet these conditions, it must not offer goods for sale during the Alert Level 4 period.
[See below for details](#)
- Food delivery** other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed (eg supermarket home delivery, food parcels from charitable organisations, subscription food boxes, or any other whole-food delivery service). Meals-on-Wheels may continue to deliver prepared food. Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- Food banks** are considered an essential social service. Food banks must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell or provide cooked food.
- Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- Turf maintenance** is not considered an essential service and should not be undertaken at this time.
- Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements. Eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available.
- Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated.
- Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets.
- Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. Anyone who was moving house before Alert Level 4 had until the end of Friday 27 March to complete their move.
- Natural health services** are considered non-essential.
- Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only. Eg fridges.
- Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**.

- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services.
[Please refer to the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation.
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced.
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

In order to provide essential non-food consumer products, businesses must comply with the following conditions:

1. Orders must be taken online or by phone only. Storefronts must not be open and the public should not be able to visit stores to select or collect goods.
2. Orders must be for only essential non-food consumer products.

3. In fulfilling orders, businesses must take all appropriate public health measures (eg physical distancing, hygiene basics, appropriate personal protective equipment for staff).
4. Orders must be home delivered in a contactless way (ie there is no physical interaction between the deliverer and customer).
5. The business must inform MBIE of its intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, and provide a list of the products they intend to offer. (See below for more information on how to do this.)

If businesses cannot meet any of the above conditions, they should not offer to sell essential goods while the country is at Alert Level 4.

This gives households access to necessities to safely isolate, stay connected, and to work or study from home during a period of Alert Level 4 restrictions. Allowing the purchase of essential products only minimises the risk to public health by reducing pressure on the distribution system and reducing movement and physical interaction between people.

It is difficult to be prescriptive about what an essential product is. We expect that essential goods cover those products that keep people warm, replace key household appliances, and maintain people's health. They may include for example blankets, heaters, kitchenware and appliances, whiteware, computer equipment and mobile phones.

Businesses will need to form a judgment as to which of their products are genuinely essential. We expect businesses and households to act responsibly when they decide what these essential goods might be.

New Zealanders are relying on each other to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. We expect businesses to minimise their product offerings and households to only order goods that are absolutely necessary. If businesses are too generous in their interpretation of what is essential or flout these rules, Government will take further action.

MBIE must be notified before you commence selling essential non-food products.

Businesses operating online, by phone or via other contactless means are not visible in the same way as a shop on the street. To have visibility of the extent of activity, MBIE is asking businesses to let it know they are operating and what essential products they are offering.

MBIE is currently establishing a register to collect this information. This will be available on Tuesday 31 March.

If you wish to pre-register immediately, you can email essentialgoods@mbie.govt.nz with the following information:

- Business name
- Business website (if offering goods online)
- Contact phone number
- New Zealand Business Number (NZBN)
- Business service address
- List of products to be offered online (by type)

If you pre-register by email, MBIE will still require you to formally register once the MBIE register is live.

This email address is for informing MBIE of your intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, it is not for general enquiries. If you have questions please contact MBIE via its [general enquiries email](#).

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): [0800 300 362](tel:0800300362)
- Central Region (Business Central): [0800 800 362](tel:0800800362)
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: [0800 50 50 96](tel:0800505096)
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: [0508 656 757](tel:0508656757)

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as you do it in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we are at Alert Level 4.

[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it is not on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff. Eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers. Eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you must close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but is not on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

[Find out more about the Ministry for Primary Industries business register below](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you work for a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we are at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333) or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how it will continue its operations: it will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you are given, to stay safe and to make sure you do not risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role. For example, business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one-in-one-out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee physical distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole-food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and ride-share drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces, and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and ride-share drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty-free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 229

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **8am, 1 April 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 housingRetirement villagesBackpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 4:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT)
At Alert Level 3 only:	
	<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 facilityAny 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

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.
[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency:
Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies:
Department of
Internal Affairs
(local government)
and State Services
Commission
(national
government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency:
Ministry of Foreign
Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency:
Ministry for Primary
Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency:
National Emergency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Courts of New Zealand
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Management Agency

Science

Lead agency:
Ministry of Business,
Innovation and
Employment

- 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.

Social services

Lead Agency:
Ministry of Social
Development/Oranga
Tamariki

- 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.
[Find out what qualifies as an essential social service on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency:
Ministry of
Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- [Customs New Zealand advice on essential and non-essential goods](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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 that 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

Utilities and communications

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- News (including news production) and broadcast media is considered essential. Daily

including supply chains

Lead agency:
Ministry of Business,
Innovation and
Employment, and
Ministry for Culture
and Heritage (for
broadcasting)

delivery of newspapers is considered essential. Non-daily newspapers for communities that are hard to reach due to physical location and with limited access to digital connectivity, or for non-English language material audiences are considered essential. Non-broadcast news organisations are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible. Security and cleaning of GLAM institutions: All galleries, libraries, archives and museums will remain closed to the public. Essential security and maintenance is permitted.

- Internet service providers
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains
- Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services)
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).
- For further guidance [visit the Ministry for Culture and Heritage](#).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 8am, 1 April 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food products, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food.
[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Essential consumer products other than food** may be provided subject to conditions. If a business cannot meet these conditions, it must not offer goods for sale during the Alert Level 4 period.
[See below for details](#)
- **Food delivery** other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed (eg supermarket home delivery, food parcels from charitable organisations, subscription food boxes, or any other whole-food delivery service). Meals-on-Wheels may continue to deliver prepared food. Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Food banks** are considered an essential social service. Food banks must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell or provide cooked food.
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered an essential service and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Real estate services** (the sale and purchase of houses) are not considered to be an essential service. All real estate business must be undertaken from home. For more information, refer to [the Real Estate Authority's guidance](#).
- Some **property management** services may be considered essential, e.g. urgent maintenance to ensure the supply of essential services (gas, water, power, waste). All other property management activities are considered non-essential and therefore must be conducted remotely, or deferred until end of Alert Level 4. For more information, please see [Tenancy Services information](#).
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements. Eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available.
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated.

Campgrounds may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.

- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- **AirBnB** is considered to be an essential service but must operate under very strict protocols, and management of access conditions (e.g. contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode / room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas). However, there must be no new non-emergency business. The above guidelines apply only for existing customers who were staying at the property at the start of the Alert 4 Lockdown period, or people who need emergency accommodation
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets.
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. Anyone who was moving house before Alert Level 4 had until the end of Friday 27 March to complete their move.
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential.
- **Plant nurseries** supplying primary industries are considered to be essential and may continue operating. Plant nurseries not supplying primary industries are not considered to be essential services and may not operate.
- **Recruitment services**, while potentially for essential services, should be done entirely remotely.
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only. Eg fridges.
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**.
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services.
[Please refer to the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation.
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced.
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

In order to provide essential non-food consumer products, businesses must comply with the following conditions:

1. Orders must be taken online or by phone only. Storefronts must not be open and the public should not be able to visit stores to select or collect goods.
2. Orders must be for only essential non-food consumer products.
3. In fulfilling orders, businesses must take all appropriate public health measures (eg physical distancing, hygiene basics, appropriate personal protective equipment for staff).
4. Orders must be home delivered in a contactless way (ie there is no physical interaction between the deliverer and customer).
5. The business must inform MBIE of its intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, and provide a list of the products they intend to offer. (See below for more information on how to do this.)

If businesses cannot meet any of the above conditions, they should not offer to sell essential goods while the country is at Alert Level 4.

This gives households access to necessities to safely isolate, stay connected, and to work or study from home during a period of Alert Level 4 restrictions. Allowing the purchase of essential products only minimises the risk to public health by reducing pressure on the distribution system and reducing movement and physical interaction between people.

Service providers who repair or install essential goods may continue to operate where repair or installation is necessary to keeping an essential good operating. Consumers can make a decision about when it is appropriate to engage a repairer or seek a replacement.

It is difficult to be prescriptive about what an essential product is. We expect that essential goods cover those products that keep people warm, replace key household appliances, and maintain people’s health. They may include for example blankets, heaters, kitchenware and appliances, whiteware, computer equipment and mobile phones.

Businesses will need to form a judgment as to which of their products are genuinely essential. We expect businesses and households to act responsibly when they decide what these essential goods might be. New Zealanders are relying on each other to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. We expect businesses to minimise their product offerings and households to only order goods that are absolutely necessary. If businesses are too generous in their interpretation of what is essential or flout these rules, Government will take further action.

New Zealanders are relying on each other to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. We expect businesses to minimise their product offerings and households to only order goods that are absolutely necessary. If businesses are too generous in their interpretation of what is essential or flout these rules, Government will take further action.

MBIE must be notified before you commence selling essential non-food products.

Businesses operating online, by phone or via other contactless means are not visible in the same way as a shop on the street. To have visibility of the extent of activity, MBIE is asking businesses to let it know they are operating and what essential products they are offering.

MBIE is currently establishing a register to collect this information. This will be available on Tuesday 31 March.

If you wish to pre-register immediately, you can email essentialgoods@mbie.govt.nz with the following information:

- Business name
- Business website (if offering goods online)
- Contact phone number
- New Zealand Business Number (NZBN)
- Business service address
- List of products to be offered online (by type)

If you pre-register by email, MBIE will still require you to formally register once the MBIE register is live.

This email address is for informing MBIE of your intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, it is not for general enquiries. If you have questions please contact MBIE via its [general enquiries email](#).

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): [0800 300 362](tel:0800300362)
- Central Region (Business Central): [0800 800 362](tel:0800800362)
- Canterbury Employersâ€™ Chamber of Commerce: [0800 50 50 96](tel:0800505096)
- Otago Southland Employersâ€™ Association: [0508 656 757](tel:0508656757)

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as you do it in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we are at Alert Level 4.

[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it is not on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff. Eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers. Eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you must close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but is not on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

[Find out more about the Ministry for Primary Industries business register below](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you work for a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we are at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333) or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how it will continue its operations: it will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

What does it mean if I am an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you are given, to stay safe and to make sure you do not risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role. For example, business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I am not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a "one-in-one-out"™ rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee physical distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole-food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and ride-share drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces, and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and ride-share drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty-free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 236

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **8 am, 1 April 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 housingRetirement villagesBackpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 4:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT)
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Fast-moving consumer goods Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment	<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 facilityAny entity supplying educational facilities or educational materials (eg printers)
Financial services	<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.

Lead agencies:
Financial Markets
Authority and
Reserve Bank of
New Zealand

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.
[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency:
Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies:
Department of
Internal Affairs
(local government)
and State Services
Commission
(national
government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency:
Ministry of Foreign
Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency:
Ministry for Primary
Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency:
National Emergency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Courts of New Zealand
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Management Agency

Science

Lead agency:
Ministry of Business,
Innovation and
Employment

- 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.

Social services

Lead Agency:
Ministry of Social
Development/Oranga
Tamariki

- 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.
[Find out what qualifies as an essential social service on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency:
Ministry of
Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- [Customs New Zealand advice on essential and non-essential goods](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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 that 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.
- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- News (including news production) and broadcast media is considered essential. Daily

Utilities and communications,

including supply chains

Lead agency:
Ministry of Business,
Innovation and
Employment, and
Ministry for Culture
and Heritage (for
broadcasting)

delivery of newspapers is considered essential. Non-daily newspapers for communities that are hard to reach due to physical location and with limited access to digital connectivity, or for non-English language material audiences are considered essential. Non-broadcast news organisations are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible. Security and cleaning of GLAM institutions: All galleries, libraries, archives and museums will remain closed to the public. Essential security and maintenance is permitted.

- Internet service providers
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains
- Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services).
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).
- For further guidance [visit the Ministry for Culture and Heritage](#).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 8am, 1 April 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food products, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food.
[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Essential consumer products other than food** may be provided subject to conditions. If a business cannot meet these conditions, it must not offer goods for sale during the Alert Level 4 period.
[See below for details](#)
- **Food delivery** other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed (eg supermarket home delivery, food parcels from charitable organisations, subscription food boxes, or any other whole-food delivery service). Meals-on-Wheels may continue to deliver prepared food. Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Food banks** are considered an essential social service. Food banks must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell or provide cooked food.
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered an essential service and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Real estate services** (the sale and purchase of houses) are not considered to be an essential service. All real estate business must be undertaken from home. For more information, refer to [the Real Estate Authority's guidance](#).
- Some **property management** services may be considered essential, eg urgent maintenance to ensure the supply of essential services (gas, water, power, waste). All other property management activities are considered non-essential and therefore must be conducted remotely, or deferred until end of Alert Level 4. For more information, please see [Tenancy Services information](#).
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements. Eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available.
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated.

Campgrounds may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.

- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- **Airbnb** is considered to be an essential service but must operate under very strict protocols, and management of access conditions (eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode / room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas). However, there must be no new non-emergency business. The above guidelines apply only for existing customers who were staying at the property at the start of the Alert Level 4 period, or people who need emergency accommodation.
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets.
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. Anyone who was moving house before Alert Level 4 had until the end of Friday 27 March to complete their move.
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential.
- **Plant nurseries** supplying primary industries are considered to be essential and may continue operating. Plant nurseries not supplying primary industries are not considered to be essential services and may not operate.
- **Recruitment services**, while potentially for essential services, should be done entirely remotely.
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only. Eg fridges.
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**.
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services.
[Please refer to the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, caf   and bar** must close all aspects of their operation.
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced.
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

In order to provide essential non-food consumer products, businesses must comply with the following conditions:

1. Orders must be taken online or by phone only. Storefronts must not be open and the public should not be able to visit stores to select or collect goods.
2. Orders must be for only essential non-food consumer products.
3. In fulfilling orders, businesses must take all appropriate public health measures (eg physical distancing, hygiene basics, appropriate personal protective equipment for staff).
4. Orders must be home delivered in a contactless way (ie there is no physical interaction between the deliverer and customer).
5. The business must inform MBIE of its intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, and provide a list of the products they intend to offer. (See below for more information on how to do this.)

If businesses cannot meet any of the above conditions, they should not offer to sell essential goods while the country is at Alert Level 4.

This gives households access to necessities to safely isolate, stay connected, and to work or study from home during a period of Alert Level 4 restrictions. Allowing the purchase of essential products only minimises the risk to public health by reducing pressure on the distribution system and reducing movement and physical interaction between people.

Service providers who repair or install essential goods may continue to operate where repair or installation is necessary to keeping an essential good operating. Consumers can make a decision about when it is appropriate to engage a repairer or seek a replacement.

It is difficult to be prescriptive about what an essential product is. We expect that essential goods cover those products that keep people warm, replace key household appliances, and maintain people’s health. They may include for example blankets, heaters, kitchenware and appliances, whiteware, computer equipment and mobile phones.

Businesses will need to form a judgment as to which of their products are genuinely essential. We expect businesses and households to act responsibly when they decide what these essential goods might be. New Zealanders are relying on each other to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. We expect businesses to minimise their product offerings and households to only order goods that are absolutely necessary. If businesses are too generous in their interpretation of what is essential or flout these rules, Government will take further action.

New Zealanders are relying on each other to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. We expect businesses to minimise their product offerings and households to only order goods that are absolutely necessary. If businesses are too generous in their interpretation of what is essential or flout these rules, Government will take further action.

MBIE must be notified before you commence selling essential non-food products.

Businesses operating online, by phone or via other contactless means are not visible in the same way as a shop on the street. To have visibility of the extent of activity, MBIE is asking businesses to let it know they are operating and what essential products they are offering.

MBIE is currently establishing a register to collect this information. This will be available on Tuesday 31 March.

If you wish to pre-register immediately, you can email essentialgoods@mbie.govt.nz with the following information:

- Business name
- Business website (if offering goods online)
- Contact phone number
- New Zealand Business Number (NZBN)
- Business service address
- List of products to be offered online (by type)

If you pre-register by email, MBIE will still require you to formally register once the MBIE register is live.

This email address is for informing MBIE of your intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, it is not for general enquiries. If you have questions please contact MBIE via its [general enquiries email](#).

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): [0800 300 362](tel:0800300362)
- Central Region (Business Central): [0800 800 362](tel:0800800362)
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: [0800 50 50 96](tel:0800505096)
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: [0508 656 757](tel:0508656757)

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as you do it in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we are at Alert Level 4.

[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it is not on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff. Eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers. Eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you must close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but is not on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific

activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

[Find out more about the Ministry for Primary Industries business register below](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you work for a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we are at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333) or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI](#)

[website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how it will continue its operations: it will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

What does it mean if I am an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you are given, to stay safe and to make sure you do not risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role. For example, business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I am not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a "one-in-one-out"™ rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee physical distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole-food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and ride-share drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces, and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and ride-share drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act.

You must comply with requirements of your license

- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty-free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 238

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **8am, 1 April 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 housingRetirement villagesBackpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 4:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT)
At Alert Level 3 only:	
	<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 facilityAny 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

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.
[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency:
Ministry of Health

- 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, kaiwhāwhina workers, social workers, aged care and community workers, and caregivers more generally
- Hospitals, primary care clinics, pharmacies, medical laboratories, care facilities (eg rest homes)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tāwhiri paku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies:
Department of
Internal Affairs
(local government)
and State Services
Commission
(national
government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency:
Ministry of Foreign
Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency:
Ministry for Primary
Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency:
National Emergency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Courts of New Zealand
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Management Agency

Science

Lead agency:
Ministry of Business,
Innovation and
Employment

- 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.

Social services

Lead Agency:
Ministry of Social
Development/Oranga
Tamariki

- 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.
[Find out what qualifies as an essential social service on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency:
Ministry of
Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- [Customs New Zealand advice on essential and non-essential goods](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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 that 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.
- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- News (including news production) and broadcast media is considered essential. Daily

Utilities and communications,

including supply chains

Lead agency:
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and
Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

delivery of newspapers is considered essential. Non-daily newspapers for communities that are hard to reach due to physical location and with limited access to digital connectivity, or for non-English language material audiences are considered essential. Non-broadcast news organisations are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible. Security and cleaning of GLAM institutions: All galleries, libraries, archives and museums will remain closed to the public. Essential security and maintenance is permitted.

- Internet service providers
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains
- Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services).
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).
- For further guidance [visit the Ministry for Culture and Heritage](#).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 8am, 1 April 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food products, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food.
[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Essential consumer products other than food** may be provided subject to conditions. If a business cannot meet these conditions, it must not offer goods for sale during the Alert Level 4 period.
[See below for details](#)
- **Food delivery** other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed (eg supermarket home delivery, food parcels from charitable organisations, subscription food boxes, or any other whole-food delivery service). Meals-on-Wheels may continue to deliver prepared food. Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Food banks** are considered an essential social service. Food banks must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell or provide cooked food.
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered an essential service and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Real estate services** (the sale and purchase of houses) are not considered to be an essential service. All real estate business must be undertaken from home. For more information, refer to [the Real Estate Authority's guidance](#).
- Some **property management** services may be considered essential, eg urgent maintenance to ensure the supply of essential services (gas, water, power, waste). All other property management activities are considered non-essential and therefore must be conducted remotely, or deferred until end of Alert Level 4. For more information, please see [Tenancy Services information](#).
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements. Eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available.
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated.

Campgrounds may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.

- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- **Airbnb** is considered to be an essential service but must operate under very strict protocols, and management of access conditions (eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode / room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas). However, there must be no new non-emergency business. The above guidelines apply only for existing customers who were staying at the property at the start of the Alert Level 4 period, or people who need emergency accommodation.
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets.
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. Anyone who was moving house before Alert Level 4 had until the end of Friday 27 March to complete their move.
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential.
- **Plant nurseries** supplying primary industries are considered to be essential and may continue operating. Plant nurseries not supplying primary industries are not considered to be essential services and may not operate.
- **Recruitment services**, while potentially for essential services, should be done entirely remotely.
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only. Eg fridges.
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**.
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services.
[Please refer to the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, caf   and bar** must close all aspects of their operation.
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced.
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

In order to provide essential non-food consumer products, businesses must comply with the following conditions:

1. Orders must be taken online or by phone only. Storefronts must not be open and the public should not be able to visit stores to select or collect goods.
2. Orders must be for only essential non-food consumer products.
3. In fulfilling orders, businesses must take all appropriate public health measures (eg physical distancing, hygiene basics, appropriate personal protective equipment for staff).
4. Orders must be home delivered in a contactless way (ie there is no physical interaction between the deliverer and customer).
5. The business must inform MBIE of its intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, and provide a list of the products they intend to offer. (See below for more information on how to do this.)

If businesses cannot meet any of the above conditions, they should not offer to sell essential goods while the country is at Alert Level 4.

This gives households access to necessities to safely isolate, stay connected, and to work or study from home during a period of Alert Level 4 restrictions. Allowing the purchase of essential products only minimises the risk to public health by reducing pressure on the distribution system and reducing movement and physical interaction between people.

Service providers who repair or install essential goods may continue to operate where repair or installation is necessary to keeping an essential good operating. Consumers can make a decision about when it is appropriate to engage a repairer or seek a replacement.

It is difficult to be prescriptive about what an essential product is. We expect that essential goods cover those products that keep people warm, replace key household appliances, and maintain people’s health. They may include for example blankets, heaters, kitchenware and appliances, whiteware, computer equipment and mobile phones.

Businesses will need to form a judgment as to which of their products are genuinely essential. We expect businesses and households to act responsibly when they decide what these essential goods might be. New Zealanders are relying on each other to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. We expect businesses to minimise their product offerings and households to only order goods that are absolutely necessary. If businesses are too generous in their interpretation of what is essential or flout these rules, Government will take further action.

New Zealanders are relying on each other to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. We expect businesses to minimise their product offerings and households to only order goods that are absolutely necessary. If businesses are too generous in their interpretation of what is essential or flout these rules, Government will take further action.

MBIE must be notified before you commence selling essential non-food products.

Businesses operating online, by phone or via other contactless means are not visible in the same way as a shop on the street. To have visibility of the extent of activity, MBIE is asking businesses to let it know they are operating and what essential products they are offering.

MBIE is currently establishing a register to collect this information. This will be available on Tuesday 31 March.

If you wish to pre-register immediately, you can email essentialgoods@mbie.govt.nz with the following information:

- Business name
- Business website (if offering goods online)
- Contact phone number
- New Zealand Business Number (NZBN)
- Business service address
- List of products to be offered online (by type)

If you pre-register by email, MBIE will still require you to formally register once the MBIE register is live.

This email address is for informing MBIE of your intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, it is not for general enquiries. If you have questions please contact MBIE via its [general enquiries email](#).

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): [0800 300 362](tel:0800300362)
- Central Region (Business Central): [0800 800 362](tel:0800800362)
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: [0800 50 50 96](tel:0800505096)
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: [0508 656 757](tel:0508656757)

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as you do it in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we are at Alert Level 4.

[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it is not on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff. Eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers. Eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you must close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but is not on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific

activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

[Find out more about the Ministry for Primary Industries business register below](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you work for a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we are at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333) or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI](#)

[website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how it will continue its operations: it will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

What does it mean if I am an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you are given, to stay safe and to make sure you do not risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role. For example, business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I am not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a "one-in-one-out" rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee physical distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole-food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and ride-share drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces, and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and ride-share drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act.

You must comply with requirements of your license

- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty-free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 241

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **8am, 1 April 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 housingRetirement villagesBackpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that 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, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 4:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT)
At Alert Level 3 only:	
	<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 facilityAny 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

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.
[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency:
Ministry of Health

- 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, kaiwhāwhina workers, social workers, aged care and community workers, and caregivers more generally
- Hospitals, primary care clinics, pharmacies, medical laboratories, care facilities (eg rest homes)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tāwhiri paku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies:
Department of
Internal Affairs
(local government)
and State Services
Commission
(national
government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency:
Ministry of Foreign
Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency:
Ministry for Primary
Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency:
National Emergency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Courts of New Zealand
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Management Agency

Science

Lead agency:
Ministry of Business,
Innovation and
Employment

- 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.

Social services

Lead Agency:
Ministry of Social
Development/Oranga
Tamariki

- 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.
[Find out what qualifies as an essential social service on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency:
Ministry of
Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- [Customs New Zealand advice on essential and non-essential goods](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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 that 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

Utilities and communications,

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- News (including news production) and broadcast media is considered essential. Daily

including supply chains

Lead agency:
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and
Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

delivery of newspapers is considered essential. Non-daily newspapers for communities that are hard to reach due to physical location and with limited access to digital connectivity, or for non-English language material audiences are considered essential. Non-broadcast news organisations are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible. Security and cleaning of GLAM institutions: All galleries, libraries, archives and museums will remain closed to the public. Essential security and maintenance is permitted.

- Internet service providers
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains
- Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services).
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).
- For further guidance [visit the Ministry for Culture and Heritage](#).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 8am, 1 April 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food products, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food.
[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Essential consumer products other than food** may be provided subject to conditions. If a business cannot meet these conditions, it must not offer goods for sale during the Alert Level 4 period.
[Details about essential non-food consumer products](#)
- **Food delivery** other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed (eg supermarket home delivery, food parcels from charitable organisations, subscription food boxes, or any other whole-food delivery service). Meals-on-Wheels may continue to deliver prepared food. Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Food banks** are considered an essential social service. Food banks must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell or provide cooked food.
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered an essential service and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Real estate services** (the sale and purchase of houses) are not considered to be an essential service. All real estate business must be undertaken from home. For more information, refer to [the Real Estate Authority's guidance](#).
- Some **property management** services may be considered essential, eg urgent maintenance to ensure the supply of essential services (gas, water, power, waste). All other property management activities are considered non-essential and therefore must be conducted remotely, or deferred until end of Alert Level 4. For more information, please see [Tenancy Services information](#).
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements. Eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available.
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated.

Campgrounds may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.

- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- **Airbnb** is considered to be an essential service but must operate under very strict protocols, and management of access conditions (eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode / room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas). However, there must be no new non-emergency business. The above guidelines apply only for existing customers who were staying at the property at the start of the Alert Level 4 period, or people who need emergency accommodation.
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets.
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. Anyone who was moving house before Alert Level 4 had until the end of Friday 27 March to complete their move.
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential.
- **Plant nurseries** supplying primary industries are considered to be essential and may continue operating. Plant nurseries not supplying primary industries are not considered to be essential services and may not operate.
- **Recruitment services**, while potentially for essential services, should be done entirely remotely.
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only. Eg fridges.
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**.
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services.
[Please refer to the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, caf   and bar** must close all aspects of their operation.
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced.
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

In order to provide essential non-food consumer products, businesses must comply with the following conditions:

1. Orders must be taken online or by phone only. Storefronts must not be open and the public should not be able to visit stores to select or collect goods.
2. Orders must be for only essential non-food consumer products.
3. In fulfilling orders, businesses must take all appropriate public health measures (eg physical distancing, hygiene basics, appropriate personal protective equipment for staff).
4. Orders must be home delivered in a contactless way (ie there is no physical interaction between the deliverer and customer).
5. The business must inform MBIE of its intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, and provide a list of the products they intend to offer. (See below for more information on how to do this.)

If businesses cannot meet any of the above conditions, they should not offer to sell essential goods while the country is at Alert Level 4.

This gives households access to necessities to safely isolate, stay connected, and to work or study from home during a period of Alert Level 4 restrictions. Allowing the purchase of essential products only minimises the risk to public health by reducing pressure on the distribution system and reducing movement and physical interaction between people.

Service providers who repair or install essential goods may continue to operate where repair or installation is necessary to keeping an essential good operating. Consumers can make a decision about when it is appropriate to engage a repairer or seek a replacement.

It is difficult to be prescriptive about what an essential product is. We expect that essential goods cover those products that keep people warm, replace key household appliances, and maintain people’s health. They may include for example blankets, heaters, kitchenware and appliances, whiteware, computer equipment and mobile phones.

Businesses will need to form a judgment as to which of their products are genuinely essential. We expect businesses and households to act responsibly when they decide what these essential goods might be. New Zealanders are relying on each other to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. We expect businesses to minimise their product offerings and households to only order goods that are absolutely necessary. If businesses are too generous in their interpretation of what is essential or flout these rules, Government will take further action.

New Zealanders are relying on each other to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. We expect businesses to minimise their product offerings and households to only order goods that are absolutely necessary. If businesses are too generous in their interpretation of what is essential or flout these rules, Government will take further action.

MBIE must be notified before you commence selling essential non-food products.

Businesses operating online, by phone or via other contactless means are not visible in the same way as a shop on the street. To have visibility of the extent of activity, MBIE is asking businesses to let it know they are operating and what essential products they are offering.

MBIE is currently establishing a register to collect this information. This will be available on Tuesday 31 March.

If you wish to pre-register immediately, you can email essentialgoods@mbie.govt.nz with the following information:

- Business name
- Business website (if offering goods online)
- Contact phone number
- New Zealand Business Number (NZBN)
- Business service address
- List of products to be offered online (by type)

If you pre-register by email, MBIE will still require you to formally register once the MBIE register is live.

This email address is for informing MBIE of your intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, it is not for general enquiries. If you have questions please contact MBIE via its [general enquiries email](#).

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): [0800 300 362](tel:0800300362)
- Central Region (Business Central): [0800 800 362](tel:0800800362)
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: [0800 50 50 96](tel:0800505096)
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: [0508 656 757](tel:0508656757)

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as you do it in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we are at Alert Level 4.

[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it is not on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff. Eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers. Eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you must close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but is not on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

[Find out more about the Ministry for Primary Industries business register below](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you work for a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we are at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required you to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333) or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how it will continue its operations: it will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

Iâ€™m an essential worker â€“ what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you are given, to stay safe and to make sure you do not risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Alert Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role. For example, business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if Iâ€™m not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a "one-in-one-out" rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee physical distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole-food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and ride-share drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces, and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and ride-share drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty-free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 243

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **8am, 1 April 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 housingRetirement villagesBackpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that is involved in building and resource consenting necessary for the above purposes. <p>Further detail on the construction sector on Building Performance website</p>
Courts, tribunals and the justice system Lead agency: Ministry of Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Courts of New Zealand, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<p>At Alert Level 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT) <p>At Alert Level 3 only:</p> <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 facilityAny 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

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.
[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency:
Ministry of Health

- 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, kaiwhāwhina workers, social workers, aged care and community workers, and caregivers more generally
- Hospitals, primary care clinics, pharmacies, medical laboratories, care facilities (eg rest homes)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tāpūpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies:
Department of
Internal Affairs
(local government)
and State Services
Commission
(national
government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency:
Ministry of Foreign
Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency:
Ministry for Primary
Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency:
National Emergency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Courts of New Zealand

Management Agency

- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Science

Lead agency:
Ministry of Business,
Innovation and
Employment

- 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.

Social services

Lead Agency:
Ministry of Social
Development/Oranga
Tamariki

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, in the following categories:
 - Where the service is the only way for people to access food and other goods they need to live day-to-day
 - A social service that provides and supports a place for someone to live
 - A social service that supports disabled people to maintain critical wellbeing
 - Crisis support for people who are unsafe[Essential social service information on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency:
Ministry of
Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- [Customs New Zealand advice on essential and non-essential goods](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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 that 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.
- Disposal of waste, including recycling, is an essential service and may continue to operate during Alert level 4. Individual operators have responsibilities to appropriately meet the health, safety, and security requirements of their staff and customers, and should not operate if they feel they cannot do so

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency:
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- News (including news production) and broadcast media is considered essential. Daily delivery of newspapers is considered essential. Non-daily newspapers for communities that are hard to reach due to physical location and with limited access to digital connectivity, or for non-English language material audiences are considered essential. Non-broadcast news organisations are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible. The physical delivery of printed magazines is not considered to be an essential service, as magazines are not considered to provide up-to-date critical news
- Security and cleaning of GLAM institutions: All galleries, libraries, archives and museums will remain closed to the public. Essential security and maintenance is permitted.
- Internet service providers
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains
- Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services).
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).
- For further guidance [visit the Ministry for Culture and Heritage](#).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 8am, 1 April 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food products, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food.
[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Essential consumer products other than food** may be provided subject to conditions. If a business cannot meet these conditions, it must not offer goods for sale during the Alert Level 4 period.
[Details about essential non-food consumer products](#)
- **Food delivery** other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed (eg supermarket home delivery, food parcels from charitable organisations, subscription food boxes, or any other whole-food delivery service). Meals-on-Wheels may continue to deliver prepared food. Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Food banks** are considered an essential social service. Food banks must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell or provide cooked food.
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered an essential service and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Real estate services** (the sale and purchase of houses) are not considered to be an essential service. All real estate business must be undertaken from home. For more information, refer to [the Real Estate Authority's guidance](#).
- Some **property management** services may be considered essential, eg urgent maintenance to ensure the supply of essential services (gas, water, power, waste). All other property management activities are considered non-essential and therefore must be conducted remotely, or deferred until end of Alert Level 4. For more information, please see [Tenancy Services information](#).
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are

complying with the necessary health and safety requirements. Eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.

- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available.
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated.
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- **Airbnb** is considered to be an essential service but must operate under very strict protocols, and management of access conditions (eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode / room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas). However, there must be no new non-emergency business. The above guidelines apply only for existing customers who were staying at the property at the start of the Alert Level 4 period, or people who need emergency accommodation.
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets.
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. Anyone who was moving house before Alert Level 4 had until the end of Friday 27 March to complete their move.
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential.
- **Plant nurseries** supplying primary industries are considered to be essential and may continue operating. Plant nurseries not supplying primary industries are not considered to be essential services and may not operate.
- **Recruitment services**, while potentially for essential services, should be done entirely remotely.
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only. Eg fridges.
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**.
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services.
[Please refer to the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation.
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced.
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

In order to provide essential non-food consumer products, businesses must comply with the following conditions:

1. Orders must be taken online or by phone only. Storefronts must not be open and the public should not be able to visit stores to select or collect goods.
2. Orders must be for only essential non-food consumer products.
3. In fulfilling orders, businesses must take all appropriate public health measures (eg physical distancing, hygiene basics, appropriate personal protective equipment for staff).
4. Orders must be home delivered in a contactless way (ie there is no physical interaction between the deliverer and customer).
5. The business must inform MBIE of its intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, and provide a list of the products they intend to offer. (See below for more information on how to do this.)

If businesses cannot meet any of the above conditions, they should not offer to sell essential goods while the country is at Alert Level 4.

This gives households access to necessities to safely isolate, stay connected, and to work or study from home during a period of Alert Level 4 restrictions. Allowing the purchase of essential products only minimises the risk to public health by reducing pressure on the distribution system and reducing movement and physical interaction between people.

Service providers who repair or install essential goods may continue to operate where repair or installation is necessary to keeping an essential good operating. Consumers can make a decision about when it is appropriate to engage a repairer or seek a replacement.

It is difficult to be prescriptive about what an essential product is. We expect that essential goods cover those products that keep people warm, replace key household appliances, and maintain people’s health. They may include for example blankets, heaters, kitchenware and appliances, whiteware, computer equipment and mobile phones.

Businesses will need to form a judgment as to which of their products are genuinely essential. We expect businesses and households to act responsibly when they decide what these essential goods might be. New Zealanders are relying on each other to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. We expect businesses to minimise their product

offerings and households to only order goods that are absolutely necessary. If businesses are too generous in their interpretation of what is essential or flout these rules, Government will take further action.

New Zealanders are relying on each other to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. We expect businesses to minimise their product offerings and households to only order goods that are absolutely necessary. If businesses are too generous in their interpretation of what is essential or flout these rules, Government will take further action.

MBIE must be notified before you commence selling essential non-food products.

Businesses operating online, by phone or via other contactless means are not visible in the same way as a shop on the street. To have visibility of the extent of activity, MBIE is asking businesses to let it know they are operating and what essential products they are offering.

MBIE is currently establishing a register to collect this information. This will be available on Tuesday 31 March.

If you wish to pre-register immediately, you can email essentialgoods@mbie.govt.nz with the following information:

- Business name
- Business website (if offering goods online)
- Contact phone number
- New Zealand Business Number (NZBN)
- Business service address
- List of products to be offered online (by type)

If you pre-register by email, MBIE will still require you to formally register once the MBIE register is live.

This email address is for informing MBIE of your intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, it is not for general enquiries. If you have questions please contact MBIE via its [general enquiries email](#).

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): [0800 300 362](tel:0800300362)
- Central Region (Business Central): [0800 800 362](tel:0800800362)
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: [0800 50 50 96](tel:0800505096)
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: [0508 656 757](tel:0508656757)

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as you do it in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we are at Alert Level 4.

[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it is not on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff. Eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers. Eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).

- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you must close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but is not on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

[Find out more about the Ministry for Primary Industries business register below](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you work for a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we are at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333) or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how it will continue its operations: it will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

If I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you are given, to stay safe and to make sure you do not risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Alert Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role. For example, business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a "one-in-one-out" rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee physical distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole-food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and ride-share drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces, and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and ride-share drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-

specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty-free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 245

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **8am, 1 April 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 housingRetirement villagesBackpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that is involved in building and resource consenting necessary for the above purposes. Further detail on the construction sector on Building Performance website
Courts, tribunals and the justice system Lead agency: Ministry of Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Courts of New Zealand, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 4:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT)
At Alert Level 3 only:	
	<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 facilityAny 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

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.
[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency:
Ministry of Health

- 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)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tāpū paku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies:
Department of
Internal Affairs
(local government)
and State Services
Commission
(national
government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency:
Ministry of Foreign
Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency:
Ministry for Primary
Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency:
National Emergency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Courts of New Zealand

Management Agency

- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Science

Lead agency:
Ministry of Business,
Innovation and
Employment

- 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.

Social services

Lead Agency:
Ministry of Social
Development/Oranga
Tamariki

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, in the following categories:
 - Where the service is the only way for people to access food and other goods they need to live day-to-day
 - A social service that provides and supports a place for someone to live
 - A social service that supports disabled people to maintain critical wellbeing
 - Crisis support for people who are unsafe[Essential social service information on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency:
Ministry of
Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- [Customs New Zealand advice on essential and non-essential goods](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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 that 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.
- Disposal of waste, including recycling, is an essential service and may continue to operate during Alert level 4. Individual operators have responsibilities to appropriately meet the health, safety, and security requirements of their staff and customers, and should not operate if they feel they cannot do so

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency:
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and
Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- News (including news production) and broadcast media is considered essential. Daily delivery of newspapers is considered essential. Non-daily newspapers for communities that are hard to reach due to physical location and with limited access to digital connectivity, or for non-English language material audiences are considered essential. Non-broadcast news organisations are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible. The physical delivery of printed magazines is not considered to be an essential service, as magazines are not considered to provide up-to-date critical news
- Security and cleaning of GLAM institutions: All galleries, libraries, archives and museums will remain closed to the public. Essential security and maintenance is permitted.
- Internet service providers
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains
- Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services).
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).
- For further guidance [visit the Ministry for Culture and Heritage](#).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 8am, 1 April 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food products, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food.
[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Essential consumer products other than food** may be provided subject to conditions. If a business cannot meet these conditions, it must not offer goods for sale during the Alert Level 4 period.
[Details about essential non-food consumer products](#)
- **Food delivery** other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed (eg supermarket home delivery, food parcels from charitable organisations, subscription food boxes, or any other whole-food delivery service). Meals-on-Wheels may continue to deliver prepared food. Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Food banks** are considered an essential social service. Food banks must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell or provide cooked food.
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered an essential service and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Real estate services** (the sale and purchase of houses) are not considered to be an essential service. All real estate business must be undertaken from home. For more information, refer to [the Real Estate Authority's guidance](#).
- Some **property management** services may be considered essential, eg urgent maintenance to ensure the supply of essential services (gas, water, power, waste). All other property management activities are considered non-essential and therefore must be conducted remotely, or deferred until end of Alert Level 4. For more information, please see [Tenancy Services information](#).
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are

complying with the necessary health and safety requirements. Eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.

- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available.
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated.
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- **Airbnb** is considered to be an essential service but must operate under very strict protocols, and management of access conditions (eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode / room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas). However, there must be no new non-emergency business. The above guidelines apply only for existing customers who were staying at the property at the start of the Alert Level 4 period, or people who need emergency accommodation.
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets.
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. Anyone who was moving house before Alert Level 4 had until the end of Friday 27 March to complete their move.
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential.
- **Plant nurseries** supplying primary industries are considered to be essential and may continue operating. Plant nurseries not supplying primary industries are not considered to be essential services and may not operate.
- **Recruitment services**, while potentially for essential services, should be done entirely remotely.
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only. Eg fridges.
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**.
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services.
[Please refer to the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation.
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced.
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

In order to provide essential non-food consumer products, businesses must comply with the following conditions:

1. Orders must be taken online or by phone only. Storefronts must not be open and the public should not be able to visit stores to select or collect goods.
2. Orders must be for only essential non-food consumer products.
3. In fulfilling orders, businesses must take all appropriate public health measures (eg physical distancing, hygiene basics, appropriate personal protective equipment for staff).
4. Orders must be home delivered in a contactless way (ie there is no physical interaction between the deliverer and customer).
5. The business must inform MBIE of its intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, and provide a list of the products they intend to offer. (See below for more information on how to do this.)

If businesses cannot meet any of the above conditions, they should not offer to sell essential goods while the country is at Alert Level 4.

This gives households access to necessities to safely isolate, stay connected, and to work or study from home during a period of Alert Level 4 restrictions. Allowing the purchase of essential products only minimises the risk to public health by reducing pressure on the distribution system and reducing movement and physical interaction between people.

Service providers who repair or install essential goods may continue to operate where repair or installation is necessary to keeping an essential good operating. Consumers can make a decision about when it is appropriate to engage a repairer or seek a replacement.

It is difficult to be prescriptive about what an essential product is. We expect that essential goods cover those products that keep people warm, replace key household appliances, and maintain people’s health. They may include for example blankets, heaters, kitchenware and appliances, whiteware, computer equipment and mobile phones.

Businesses will need to form a judgment as to which of their products are genuinely essential. We expect businesses and households to act responsibly when they decide what these essential goods might be. New Zealanders are relying on each other to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. We expect businesses to minimise their product

offerings and households to only order goods that are absolutely necessary. If businesses are too generous in their interpretation of what is essential or flout these rules, Government will take further action.

New Zealanders are relying on each other to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. We expect businesses to minimise their product offerings and households to only order goods that are absolutely necessary. If businesses are too generous in their interpretation of what is essential or flout these rules, Government will take further action.

MBIE must be notified before you commence selling essential non-food products.

Businesses operating online, by phone or via other contactless means are not visible in the same way as a shop on the street. To have visibility of the extent of activity, MBIE is asking businesses to let it know they are operating and what essential products they are offering.

MBIE is currently establishing a register to collect this information. This will be available on Tuesday 31 March.

If you wish to pre-register immediately, you can email essentialgoods@mbie.govt.nz with the following information:

- Business name
- Business website (if offering goods online)
- Contact phone number
- New Zealand Business Number (NZBN)
- Business service address
- List of products to be offered online (by type)

If you pre-register by email, MBIE will still require you to formally register once the MBIE register is live.

This email address is for informing MBIE of your intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, it is not for general enquiries. If you have questions please contact MBIE via its [general enquiries email](#).

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): [0800 300 362](tel:0800300362)
- Central Region (Business Central): [0800 800 362](tel:0800800362)
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: [0800 50 50 96](tel:0800505096)
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: [0508 656 757](tel:0508656757)

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as you do it in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we are at Alert Level 4.

[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it is not on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff. Eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers. Eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).

- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you must close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but is not on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

[Find out more about the Ministry for Primary Industries business register below](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you work for a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we are at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333) or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how it will continue its operations: it will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

If I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you are given, to stay safe and to make sure you do not risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Alert Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role. For example, business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a "one-in-one-out" rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee physical distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole-food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and ride-share drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces, and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and ride-share drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-

specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty-free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 247

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during the Alert Level 4 period

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

What are essential businesses?

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service is okay to remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **9.20am, 2 April 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 housingRetirement villagesBackpackers accommodation (see Additional decisions and exemptions for more information)
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 Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chainAny entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elementsAny entity with statutory responsibilities or that is involved in building and resource consenting necessary for the above purposes. Further detail on the construction sector on Building Performance website
Courts, tribunals and the justice system Lead agency: Ministry of Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Courts of New Zealand, tribunalsCritical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).
At Alert Level 4:	
Education Lead agency: Ministry of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT)
At Alert Level 3 only:	
Fast-moving consumer goods Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment	<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 facilityAny entity supplying educational facilities or educational materials (eg printers)
	<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

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.
[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency:
Ministry of Health

- 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, kaiwhāwhina workers, social workers, aged care and community workers, and caregivers more generally
- Hospitals, primary care clinics, pharmacies, medical laboratories, care facilities (eg rest homes)
- Emergency dental and optometry care services
- Any entity providing ambulance services
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tāpūpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries)
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.
[The Ministry of Health has further information on essential services in the health and disability system](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies:
Department of
Internal Affairs
(local government)
and State Services
Commission
(national
government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency:
Ministry of Foreign
Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency:
Ministry for Primary
Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency:
National Emergency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Courts of New Zealand

Management Agency

- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Science

Lead agency:
Ministry of Business,
Innovation and
Employment

- 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.

Social services

Lead Agency:
Ministry of Social
Development/Oranga
Tamariki

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, in the following categories:
 - Where the service is the only way for people to access food and other goods they need to live day-to-day
 - A social service that provides and supports a place for someone to live
 - A social service that supports disabled people to maintain critical wellbeing
 - Crisis support for people who are unsafe[Essential social service information on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency:
Ministry of
Transport

- The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector. This may be updated as the response evolves.
[Ministry of Transport: Essential services](#)
- [Customs New Zealand advice on essential and non-essential goods](#)
- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services)
- 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 that 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.
- Disposal of waste, including recycling, is an essential service and may continue to operate during Alert level 4. Individual operators have responsibilities to appropriately meet the health, safety, and security requirements of their staff and customers, and should not operate if they feel they cannot do so

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency:
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and
Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- News (including news production) and broadcast media is considered essential. Daily delivery of newspapers is considered essential. Non-daily newspapers for communities that are hard to reach due to physical location and with limited access to digital connectivity, or for non-English language material audiences are considered essential. Non-broadcast news organisations are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible. The physical delivery of printed magazines is not considered to be an essential service, as magazines are not considered to provide up-to-date critical news
- Security and cleaning of GLAM institutions: All galleries, libraries, archives and museums will remain closed to the public. Essential security and maintenance is permitted.
- Internet service providers
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains
- Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services).
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).
- For further guidance [visit the Ministry for Culture and Heritage](#).

Additional decisions and exemptions – updated 8am, 1 April 2020

- **All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services.** A supermarket's primary focus is selling food products, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food.
[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- **Essential consumer products other than food** may be provided subject to conditions. If a business cannot meet these conditions, it must not offer goods for sale during the Alert Level 4 period.
[Details about essential non-food consumer products](#)
- **Food delivery** other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed (eg supermarket home delivery, food parcels from charitable organisations, subscription food boxes, or any other whole-food delivery service). Meals-on-Wheels may continue to deliver prepared food. Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- **Food banks** are considered an essential social service. Food banks must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell or provide cooked food.
- **Locksmiths** can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- **Turf maintenance** is not considered an essential service and should not be undertaken at this time.
- **Real estate services** (the sale and purchase of houses) are not considered to be an essential service. All real estate business must be undertaken from home. For more information, refer to [the Real Estate Authority's guidance](#).
- Some **property management** services may be considered essential, eg urgent maintenance to ensure the supply of essential services (gas, water, power, waste). All other property management activities are considered non-essential and therefore must be conducted remotely, or deferred until end of Alert Level 4. For more information, please see [Tenancy Services information](#).
- **Pet care services** are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- **Vehicle washing services** must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are

complying with the necessary health and safety requirements. Eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.

- **Road safety equipment for road construction** should only be used only where maintenance is essential.
- **Farmers markets** are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available.
- **Liquor stores** must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.
- **Pest management** may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated.
- **Campgrounds** may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- **Backpacker accommodation** providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions. Eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- **Airbnb** is considered to be an essential service but must operate under very strict protocols, and management of access conditions (eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode / room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas). However, there must be no new non-emergency business. The above guidelines apply only for existing customers who were staying at the property at the start of the Alert Level 4 period, or people who need emergency accommodation.
- **Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers** are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets.
- **Furniture moving**, in general, is not considered to be essential. Anyone who was moving house before Alert Level 4 had until the end of Friday 27 March to complete their move.
- **Natural health services** are considered non-essential.
- **Plant nurseries** supplying primary industries are considered to be essential and may continue operating. Plant nurseries not supplying primary industries are not considered to be essential services and may not operate.
- **Recruitment services**, while potentially for essential services, should be done entirely remotely.
- **Security** is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- **Self-storage facilities** can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only. Eg fridges.
- **Critical support** services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as **IT** and **Payroll**.
- **Rental cars** may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services.
[Please refer to the Ministry of Transport website](#)
- Every **restaurant, café and bar** must close all aspects of their operation.
- **Self-service laundries** can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced.
- **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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

In order to provide essential non-food consumer products, businesses must comply with the following conditions:

1. Orders must be taken online or by phone only. Storefronts must not be open and the public should not be able to visit stores to select or collect goods.
2. Orders must be for only essential non-food consumer products.
3. In fulfilling orders, businesses must take all appropriate public health measures (eg physical distancing, hygiene basics, appropriate personal protective equipment for staff).
4. Orders must be home delivered in a contactless way (ie there is no physical interaction between the deliverer and customer).
5. The business must inform MBIE of its intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, and provide a list of the products they intend to offer. (See below for more information on how to do this.)

If businesses cannot meet any of the above conditions, they should not offer to sell essential goods while the country is at Alert Level 4.

This gives households access to necessities to safely isolate, stay connected, and to work or study from home during a period of Alert Level 4 restrictions. Allowing the purchase of essential products only minimises the risk to public health by reducing pressure on the distribution system and reducing movement and physical interaction between people.

Service providers who repair or install essential goods may continue to operate where repair or installation is necessary to keeping an essential good operating. Consumers can make a decision about when it is appropriate to engage a repairer or seek a replacement.

It is difficult to be prescriptive about what an essential product is. We expect that essential goods cover those products that keep people warm, replace key household appliances, and maintain people’s health. They may include for example blankets, heaters, kitchenware and appliances, whiteware, computer equipment and mobile phones.

Businesses will need to form a judgment as to which of their products are genuinely essential. We expect businesses and households to act responsibly when they decide what these essential goods might be. New Zealanders are relying on each other to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. We expect businesses to minimise their product

offerings and households to only order goods that are absolutely necessary. If businesses are too generous in their interpretation of what is essential or flout these rules, Government will take further action.

New Zealanders are relying on each other to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. We expect businesses to minimise their product offerings and households to only order goods that are absolutely necessary. If businesses are too generous in their interpretation of what is essential or flout these rules, Government will take further action.

MBIE must be notified before you commence selling essential non-food products.

Businesses operating online, by phone or via other contactless means are not visible in the same way as a shop on the street. To have visibility of the extent of activity, MBIE is asking businesses to let it know they are operating and what essential products they are offering.

MBIE is currently establishing a register to collect this information. This will be available on Tuesday 31 March.

If you wish to pre-register immediately, you can email essentialgoods@mbie.govt.nz with the following information:

- Business name
- Business website (if offering goods online)
- Contact phone number
- New Zealand Business Number (NZBN)
- Business service address
- List of products to be offered online (by type)

If you pre-register by email, MBIE will still require you to formally register once the MBIE register is live.

This email address is for informing MBIE of your intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, it is not for general enquiries. If you have questions please contact MBIE via its [general enquiries email](#).

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): [0800 300 362](tel:0800300362)
- Central Region (Business Central): [0800 800 362](tel:0800800362)
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: [0800 50 50 96](tel:0800505096)
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: [0508 656 757](tel:0508656757)

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as you do it in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we are at Alert Level 4.

[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it is not on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff. Eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers. Eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).

- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you must close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but is not on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

[Find out more about the Ministry for Primary Industries business register below](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you work for a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we are at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333) or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how it will continue its operations: it will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

If I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you are given, to stay safe and to make sure you do not risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Alert Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role. For example, business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a "one-in-one-out" rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee physical distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole-food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and ride-share drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces, and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and ride-share drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-

specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty-free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Essential businesses during Alert Level 4

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

Information for business owners and employees

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

Getting more information about essential businesses

More information about essential business, what makes a service essential, and a full list of exemptions and new

decisions, is on the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) website.

[MBIE advice on essential services](#)

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can call [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

Businesses that are essential

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service can remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **2.40pm, 2 April 2020**.

Accommodation

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity that provides accommodation services for essential workers, isolation/quarantine, and emergency housing.
- Retirement villages.
- Backpacker accommodation providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions, eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- Some property management services may be considered essential, eg urgent maintenance to ensure the supply of essential services (gas, water, power, waste). All other property management activities are considered non-essential and therefore must be conducted remotely, or deferred until end of Alert Level 4.
[Information for tenants and landlords on Tenancy Services website](#)
- Campgrounds may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access, eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- Airbnb is considered to be an essential service but must operate under very strict protocols, and management of access conditions, eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode / room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas. However, there must be no new non-emergency business. The above guidelines apply only for existing customers who were staying at the property at the start of the Alert Level 4 period, or people who need emergency accommodation.

Border

Lead agency: Customs New Zealand

- Customs New Zealand, Immigration New Zealand and the Ministry for Primary Industries.

Building and construction

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chain.
- Any entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elements.
- Any entity with statutory responsibilities or that is involved in building and resource consenting necessary for the above purposes.
- 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.

[Building and construction sector guidance on MBIE's Building Performance website](#)

Courts, tribunals and the justice system

Lead agency: Ministry of Justice

- Courts of New Zealand, tribunals.
- Critical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).

Education

Lead agency: Ministry of Education

At Alert Level 4:

- Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT).

At Alert Level 3 only:

- 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

- 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.
- All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services. A supermarket's primary focus is selling food products, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food.

[Download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)

- Essential consumer products other than food may be provided subject to conditions. If a business cannot meet these conditions, it must not offer goods for sale during the Alert Level 4 period.
[Details about essential non-food consumer products](#)
- Food delivery other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed (eg supermarket home delivery, food parcels from charitable organisations, subscription food boxes, or any other whole-food delivery service). Meals-on-Wheels may continue to deliver prepared food. Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- Food banks are considered an essential social service. Food banks must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell or provide cooked food.

Liquor stores must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.

Financial services

Lead agencies: Financial Markets Authority and Reserve Bank of New Zealand

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.

[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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).
- Emergency dental and optometry care services.
- Any entity providing ambulance services.
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries).
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[Guidance on essential services in the health and disability system on the Ministry of Health website](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

- Plant nurseries supplying primary industries are considered to be essential and may continue operating. Plant nurseries not supplying primary industries are not considered to be essential services and may not operate.
- Pest management may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated.

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- Courts of New Zealand.
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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 or 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, in the following categories:
 - Where the service is the only way for people to access food and other goods they need to live day-to-day.
 - A social service that provides and supports a place for someone to live.
 - A social service that supports disabled people to maintain critical wellbeing.
 - Crisis support for people who are unsafe.

[Ministry of Social Development information about social sector organisations providing essential services](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

[The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector on their website](#)

This may be updated as the response evolves.

[Advice from Customs New Zealand on essential and non-essential goods](#)

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers.
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services).
- 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 that 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.
- Disposal of waste, including recycling, is an essential service and may continue to operate during Alert level 4. Individual operators have responsibilities to appropriately meet the health, safety, and security requirements of their staff and customers, and should not operate if they feel they cannot do so.
- Rental cars may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services.
[Ministry of Transport guidance on essential transport](#)
- Vehicle washing services must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements, eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- Road safety equipment for road construction should only be used only where maintenance is essential.

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities.
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- News (including news production) and broadcast media is considered essential. Daily delivery of newspapers is considered essential. Non-daily newspapers for communities that are hard to reach due to physical location and with limited access to digital connectivity, or for non-English language material audiences are considered essential. Non-broadcast news organisations are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible. The physical delivery of printed magazines is not considered to be an essential service, as magazines are not considered to provide up-to-date critical news.
- Security and cleaning of GLAM institutions: All galleries, libraries, archives and museums will remain closed to the public. Essential security and maintenance is permitted.
- Security is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- Internet service providers.
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains.

Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services).

- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).
- Locksmiths can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- Recruitment services, while potentially for essential services, should be done entirely remotely.
- Self-storage facilities can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges.
- Critical support services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as IT and Payroll.
- Self-service laundries can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced.
- The Tiwai Point smelter is exempt from closure.
- 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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

Businesses which are confirmed as non-essential

- Every restaurant, café and bar must close all aspects of their operation.
- Turf maintenance is not considered an essential service and should not be undertaken at this time.
- Real estate services (the sale and purchase of houses) are not considered to be an essential service. All real estate business must be undertaken from home.
[Real Estate Authority guidance](#)
- Pet care services are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- Farmers markets are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available.
- Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets.
- Furniture moving, in general, is not considered to be essential. Anyone who was moving house before Alert Level 4 had until the end of Friday 27 March to complete their move.
- Natural health services are considered non-essential.
- NZ Steel is to shut down in a way that allows for production to recommence easily.

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

In order to provide essential non-food consumer products, businesses must comply with the following conditions:

1. Orders must be taken online or by phone only. Storefronts must not be open and the public should not be able to visit stores to select or collect goods.
2. Orders must be for only essential non-food consumer products.
3. In fulfilling orders, businesses must take all appropriate public health measures (eg physical distancing, hygiene basics, appropriate personal protective equipment for staff).
4. Orders must be home delivered in a contactless way (ie there is no physical interaction between the deliverer and customer).
5. The business must inform MBIE of its intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, and provide a list of the products they intend to offer. (See below for more information on how to do this.)

If businesses cannot meet any of the above conditions, they should not offer to sell essential goods while the country is at Alert Level 4.

This gives households access to necessities to safely isolate, stay connected, and to work or study from home during a period of Alert Level 4 restrictions. Allowing the purchase of essential products only minimises the risk to public health by reducing pressure on the distribution system and reducing movement and physical interaction between people.

Service providers who repair or install essential goods may continue to operate where repair or installation is necessary to keeping an essential good operating. Consumers can make a decision about when it is appropriate to engage a repairer or seek a replacement.

It is difficult to be prescriptive about what an essential product is. We expect that essential goods cover those products that keep people warm, replace key household appliances, and maintain people's health. They may include for example blankets, heaters, kitchenware and appliances, whiteware, computer equipment and mobile phones.

Businesses will need to form a judgment as to which of their products are genuinely essential. We expect businesses and households to act responsibly when they decide what these essential goods might be. New Zealanders are relying on each other to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. We expect businesses to minimise their product offerings and households to only order goods that are absolutely necessary. If businesses are too generous in their interpretation of what is essential or flout these rules, Government will take further action.

New Zealanders are relying on each other to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19. We expect businesses to minimise their product offerings and households to only order goods that are absolutely necessary. If businesses are too generous in their interpretation of what is essential or flout these rules, Government will take further action.

MBIE must be notified before you commence selling essential non-food products.

Businesses operating online, by phone or via other contactless means are not visible in the same way as a shop on the street. To have visibility of the extent of activity, MBIE is asking businesses to let it know they are operating and what

essential products they are offering.

MBIE is currently establishing a register to collect this information. This will be available on Tuesday 31 March.

If you wish to pre-register immediately, you can email essentialgoods@mbie.govt.nz with the following information:

- Business name
- Business website (if offering goods online)
- Contact phone number
- New Zealand Business Number (NZBN)
- Business service address
- List of products to be offered online (by type)

If you pre-register by email, MBIE will still require you to formally register once the MBIE register is live.

This email address is for informing MBIE of your intention to offer essential non-food products for sale, it is not for general enquiries. If you have questions please contact MBIE via its [general enquiries email](#).

Questions and answers for businesses

How are essential services defined?

Essential services are any the Government has decided can continue operating at their premises, under Alert Level 4. All essential services will still need to operate in a way that limits the risk of the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

If your business is on the essential services list:

- if your staff can work from home, they must
- if they need to come to work so that you can carry out an essential service, you must ensure all appropriate measures are taken to minimise the transmission of COVID-19
- you must only operate what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

Businesses operating non-essential services must shut down their premises. These businesses can continue to operate with staff working from their own homes. If this is not possible, these businesses must close their operations.

What is considered an essential service may change over time. Some activities that are not essential now may become essential if New Zealand remains at alert level 4 for a sustained period.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

You can also contact the BusinessNZ family for advice at:

- Upper North Island (EMA): [0800 300 362](tel:0800300362)
- Central Region (Business Central): [0800 800 362](tel:0800800362)
- Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce: [0800 50 50 96](tel:0800505096)
- Otago Southland Employers' Association: [0508 656 757](tel:0508656757)

How can businesses find out if they are essential?

A list of essential services is available above.

The list may be updated by the Government.

My business provides services or products to both essential and non-essential businesses, what do I do?

If your business is part of the supply chain for essential businesses, it may continue to supply those critical products and services **to essential businesses only**.

You may continue to operate, as long as you do it in a way that limits public health risks by taking the following measures:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions amongst staff and with and between customers
- ensure appropriate health, hygiene and safety measures are in place
- restrict activity to only what is essential while we are at Alert Level 4.

[You can download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)

Do I need to shut my business if it is not on the list of essential services?

At Alert Level 4, you must close your premises, but you may operate your business remotely (eg with workers working from home) if you are able to do so.

My business is an essential service – what do I need to do to keep people safe?

If you provide an essential service, your business can continue to work from business premises at Alert Level 4, as long as the work is done in a way that limits or eliminates the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Businesses should:

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

It is for an industry or business to decide how to best do this. We would expect practices to include the likes of:

- working from home as far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff. Eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks, and flexible working arrangements.
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers. Eg 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 hand washing and sanitisers.
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces (cleaning advice is available on the Ministry of Health website).
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure you are able to operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you must close while you put in place appropriate measures.

There is guidance and advice on how to manage risks in your workplace on [WorkSafe's website](#).

What should I do if I think my business should be an essential service, but is not on the list?

There are designated lead government agencies in each sector who are responsible for deciding whether specific activities count as essential services. The list of essential services may be amended by government over time as our

response to COVID-19 evolves.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can get in touch with general enquiries at [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

Can I get accreditation for my essential business?

There is not a formal accreditation for essential businesses or their employees.

If you wish, you as an employer can provide letters to your staff to detail the specific essential functions they are undertaking with references to the essential services outlined above.

[Find out more about the Ministry for Primary Industries business register below](#)

What does the 'supply chain' mean?

The 'supply chain' for a particular good or service refers to all the inputs and processes involved in its creation and distribution. When something is an essential service, this also includes critical components in its supply chain. For example, because food distribution is an essential service, this means the growing of food is also considered essential.

My business is a part of an essential supply chain. What is expected?

If you work for a business that is a part of a supply chain delivering an essential service, you must only provide critical products or services necessary to maintain the essential service while we are at Alert Level 4. You cannot operate other parts of your business during this time.

What are 'fast-moving consumer goods'?

These are generally the kinds of things you buy at supermarkets. They are affordable, in high demand and sold quickly.

These would typically include:

- food
- beverages
- toiletries and personal care items
- cleaning products
- baby products, eg formula and nappies
- pet food
- over-the-counter medicines
- alcohol, tobacco and vaping products
- stationery.

Primary Industries Businesses Register for Safe Practice

If you provide an essential service within the primary industries, including critical support goods and services, you are required to register with the Ministry for Primary Industries and answer 11 questions about how you intend to stop any spread of COVID-19.

Businesses with 5 or fewer people (including the owner) working at each business site that can achieve physical distancing are exempt.

Primary sector businesses can contact MPI for more information at [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333) or info@mpi.govt.nz or [visit the MPI website](#).

A list of key essential services can be found on the MPI website:

[Key services: MPI website](#)

Questions and answers for workers

What does it mean if I work in an essential service?

Each essential business needs to plan for how it will continue its operations: it will need to meet appropriate public health measures or arrange for essential work to be done from home. You should work from home if you can, but your employer will tell you about the specific arrangements for your workplace.

I'm an essential worker – what do I need to do to keep safe?

Workers need to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, while working. This means following and cooperating with any reasonable health and safety instructions, policies and procedures that you are given, to stay safe and to make sure you do not risk the health and safety of others that you come in contact with through your work. Work with your employer to help develop any new ways of working that are needed to keep you and others safe.

What essential transport services can be used during Alert Level 4?

If you carry out work in the transport sector, you may have an exemption when travel is required for essential work or when essential work is being undertaken. At all other times, workers must avoid all non-essential travel and follow the guidance for Alert Level 4.

Public transport used to transport people working in essential services includes domestic aircraft, ferries, buses and trains.

Essential workers may be asked, while travelling, to show who they work for. We encourage essential workers to carry some form of identification to show who they are, who they work for, and their role. For example, business card, letter from their employer or work ID.

What do I do if I work for a business that is not an essential service but my employer requests I come into work?

We will work with businesses to make sure they are complying with the Alert Level 4 restrictions.

If a business chooses to ignore official advice and continues to trade, there will be actions taken to stop this.

If you are unsure if you should be working, you can contact your union or email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

What if I'm not sure whether I work in an essential service?

In the first instance, contact your employer. If you are still unsure, you can email essential@mbie.govt.nz.

Questions and answers for consumers

Can I still shop at my dairy?

Yes, dairies can choose to stay open but must have a 'one-in-one-out' rule, and cannot sell food prepared on the premises.

Are food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes and takeaways) considered essential services?

Takeaway operations and premises, as well as cooked food delivery services, must shut down at Alert Level 4. We cannot guarantee physical distancing in every kitchen or that everyone who works in a kitchen is well.

Meals on Wheels has been granted an exception to this restriction due to the social service it provides.

Subscription food boxes are considered an essential service.

Whole-food delivery services (eg subscription food boxes) and supermarket delivery services can continue to operate but must use non-contact delivery measures ie online and phone orders and contactless delivery.

Can I still courier or post parcels and packages?

You should only post or courier items that are essential to the provision of the necessities of life.

During this period, our postal and courier service will be busy helping our society receive items and goods that are essential. Adding additional pressure and burden to that service may impact on society's wider ability to get through this period, and to stop the virus in its tracks.

Will public transport continue to run? Will taxis and ride-share drivers continue to work?

At Alert Level 4 there will likely be reduced public transport service levels. Public transport will be focused on allowing essential workers to travel between their homes and workplaces, and to allow the public to access food and medical care.

Taxis and ride-share drivers can continue to work at Alert Levels 3 and 4, but will need to meet the appropriate health measures. Similar to public transport, there will likely be reduced service levels.

If you have neighbours who are reliant on public transport to go to the supermarket, you could offer to do their grocery shopping (while taking all necessary health measures).

Is animal welfare covered?

Yes. Veterinary and animal health/welfare services are essential services, and pet food is a fast-moving consumer good. Pet food is available at supermarkets and vets.

Travel to look after animals is allowed, as long as you take the necessary health measures, and comply with any region-specific travel measures.

Can I buy alcohol?

Alcohol is available to be purchased in supermarkets, and Licensing Trust liquor stores (open liquor store premises in a Licensing Trust Areas can only operate with a one-in-one-out rule).

All other liquor stores must be closed to the public.

The online sale and contactless delivery of alcohol (including spirits) is permitted under the following conditions:

- You must hold an off-license with an endorsement for remote sales under the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act. You must comply with requirements of your license
- The agreed quantity for spirits purchased must be no more than the customs/duty-free allowance which is 3 bottles (or other containers) of spirits or liqueur (each bottle or container can hold a maximum of 1.125 litres) per order.

Why is alcohol considered essential?

Closing all alcohol outlets could lead to people living in Licensing Trust Areas travelling outside of their communities to purchase alcohol. That would mean they are breaking self-isolation, and impacting our ability to contain transmission.

Can I still go to hardware stores?

Hardware stores will only be open to tradespeople, who need supplies in order to provide an essential service. They will not be open to the public.

Can I get a trade person to come and do essential maintenance at my house?

Yes, if this is immediately essential to maintain the necessities of life or critical to safety. This includes electricians, plumbers and builders.

[Read more at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's building and construction information page](#)

I am a tenant and I have concerns about my tenancy. Who do I speak to?

All queries relating to tenancies can be directed to Tenancy Services.

[Read more about Tenancy Services](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Essential businesses during Alert Level 4

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

Information for business owners and employees

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

Getting more information about essential businesses

More information about essential business, what makes a service essential, and a full list of exemptions and new

decisions, is on the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) website.

[MBIE advice on essential services](#)

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can call [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

Businesses that are essential

The following services are considered essential. That 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 for an essential service can remain in operation.

This list will evolve over time. It was last updated at **2.40pm, 2 April 2020**.

Accommodation

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity that provides accommodation services for essential workers, isolation/quarantine, and emergency housing.
- Retirement villages.
- Backpacker accommodation providers may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access conditions, eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- Some property management services may be considered essential, eg urgent maintenance to ensure the supply of essential services (gas, water, power, waste). All other property management activities are considered non-essential and therefore must be conducted remotely, or deferred until end of Alert Level 4.
[Information for tenants and landlords on Tenancy Services website](#)
- Campgrounds may continue to operate under very strict protocols and management of access, eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode/room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas.
- Airbnb is considered to be an essential service but must operate under very strict protocols, and management of access conditions, eg contact to be maintained only with people staying in the same abode / room; common social and recreation areas to be closed; split shift access to common areas. However, there must be no new non-emergency business. The above guidelines apply only for existing customers who were staying at the property at the start of the Alert Level 4 period, or people who need emergency accommodation.

Border

Lead agency: Customs New Zealand

- Customs New Zealand, Immigration New Zealand and the Ministry for Primary Industries.

Building and construction

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chain.

- Any entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elements.
- Any entity with statutory responsibilities or that is involved in building and resource consenting necessary for the above purposes.
- 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.

[Building and construction sector guidance on MBIE's Building Performance website](#)

Courts, tribunals and the justice system

Lead agency: Ministry of Justice

- Courts of New Zealand, tribunals.
- Critical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).

Education

Lead agency: Ministry of Education

At Alert Level 4:

- Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT).

At Alert Level 3 only:

- 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

- 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.
- All supermarkets and dairies are considered essential services. A supermarket's primary focus is selling food products, and is a retail store operating on a self-service basis, selling groceries, fresh produce, meat, bakery and dairy products, and sometimes an assortment of non-food goods. Dairies must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell cooked food.
[Download a 'one at a time in our store please' poster from our resources page](#)
- Essential consumer products other than food may be provided subject to conditions. If a business cannot meet these conditions, it must not offer goods for sale during the Alert Level 4 period.
[Details about essential non-food consumer products](#)
- Food delivery other than cooked prepared meals such as takeaways is allowed (eg supermarket home delivery, food parcels from charitable organisations, subscription food boxes, or any other whole-food delivery service). Meals-on-Wheels may continue to deliver prepared food. Ordering, payment and delivery must be contactless and the business must operate safely within the general health guidelines such as physical separation and hygiene.
- Food banks are considered an essential social service. Food banks must operate a one-in-one-out rule, and cannot sell or provide cooked food.
- Liquor stores must close to the public unless they are in Licensing Trust Areas and the liquor store is operated by the Licensing Trust in that area. Open premises in Licensing Trust Areas can operate with a one-in-one-out rule.

Financial services

Lead agencies: Financial Markets Authority and Reserve Bank of New Zealand

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.

[Reserve Bank guidance on essential financial services](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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).
- Emergency dental and optometry care services.
- Any entity providing ambulance services.
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries).
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[Guidance on essential services in the health and disability system on the Ministry of Health website](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).
- Plant nurseries supplying primary industries are considered to be essential and may continue operating. Plant nurseries not supplying primary industries are not considered to be essential services and may not operate.

- Pest management may be undertaken only where required for human health and safety, and it is essential during the Alert Level 4 period. However, operators must ensure people have somewhere safe to go while the process is underway, in particular where a property is being vacated.

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- Courts of New Zealand.
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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 or 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, in the following categories:
 - Where the service is the only way for people to access food and other goods they need to live day-to-day.
 - A social service that provides and supports a place for someone to live.
 - A social service that supports disabled people to maintain critical wellbeing.
 - Crisis support for people who are unsafe.

[Ministry of Social Development information about social sector organisations providing essential services](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

[The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector on their website](#)

This may be updated as the response evolves.

[Advice from Customs New Zealand on essential and non-essential goods](#)

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers.
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing,

mechanics, tyre services).

- 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 that 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.
- Disposal of waste, including recycling, is an essential service and may continue to operate during Alert level 4. Individual operators have responsibilities to appropriately meet the health, safety, and security requirements of their staff and customers, and should not operate if they feel they cannot do so.
- Rental cars may be accessed in some circumstances. Ministry of Transport has put out documentation on essential transport logistics and services.
[Ministry of Transport guidance on essential transport](#)
- Vehicle washing services must only be undertaken when supporting essential services to ensure they are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements, eg washing off contaminated or biohazard materials.
- Road safety equipment for road construction should only be used only where maintenance is essential.

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities.
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- News (including news production) and broadcast media is considered essential. Daily delivery of newspapers is considered essential. Non-daily newspapers for communities that are hard to reach due to physical location and with limited access to digital connectivity, or for non-English language material audiences are considered essential. Non-broadcast news organisations are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible. The physical delivery of printed magazines is not considered to be an essential service, as magazines are not considered to provide up-to-date critical news.
- Security and cleaning of GLAM institutions: All galleries, libraries, archives and museums will remain closed to the public. Essential security and maintenance is permitted.
- Security is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- Internet service providers.
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains.
- Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services).

Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

- Locksmiths can undertake essential work on emergency call-outs and essential activity to maintain the security of premises/personal properties.
- Recruitment services, while potentially for essential services, should be done entirely remotely.
- Self-storage facilities can operate only to facilitate access for essentials. New sales or expiries of units are considered non-essential. Access to existing lockers is permitted for essential items or services only, eg fridges.
- Critical support services to ensure businesses and workers can continue working from home are considered to be essential. This includes functions such as IT and Payroll.
- Self-service laundries can stay open, with 2-metre physical distancing to be enforced.
- The Tiwai Point smelter is exempt from closure.
- 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.

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

Businesses which are confirmed as non-essential

- Every restaurant, café and bar must close all aspects of their operation.
- Turf maintenance is not considered an essential service and should not be undertaken at this time.
- Real estate services (the sale and purchase of houses) are not considered to be an essential service. All real estate business must be undertaken from home.
[Real Estate Authority guidance](#)
- Pet care services are not considered to be essential, except where necessary to maintain existing boarding of animals in pet care, or for long-term care when no other alternatives are available.
- Farmers markets are not considered to be an essential service, as alternatives are available.
- Butchers, bakeries and similar small-scale food retailers are considered non-essential, as similar products are readily available in supermarkets.
- Furniture moving, in general, is not considered to be essential. Anyone who was moving house before Alert Level 4 had until the end of Friday 27 March to complete their move.
- Natural health services are considered non-essential.
- NZ Steel is to shut down in a way that allows for production to recommence easily.

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

[More information on the conditions that businesses must comply with, and details on how to register your business](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 271

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during Alert Level 4

Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4.

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 physical interactions with others outside of your household.

List of essential businesses

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[MBIE list of essential services](#)

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Information for business owners and employees

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements

- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

What should non-essential businesses do?

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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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

[More information on the conditions that businesses must comply with, and details on how to register your business](#)

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 277

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

Essential businesses during Alert Level 4

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Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all physical interactions with others outside of your household.

List of essential businesses

A full list of what qualifies as an essential business is on the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) website.

[MBIE list of essential businesses](#)

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can call [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

Information for business owners and employees

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements

- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg through online or phone orders, contactless delivery or managed entry (while also avoiding crowding outside), and physical distancing both inside and outside the premises
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Version: 279

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

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Version: 281

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

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Version: 283

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

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Version: 285

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

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Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 287

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

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[Employment guidance for businesses and workers](#)

[Health and safety guidance work essential workplaces](#)

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Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 290

Hero statement: *None*

Content type: *Standard page content*

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Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 312

Hero statement: Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4. This means food, medicine, healthcare, energy, fuel, waste-removal, internet and financial support will continue to be available.

Content type: Standard page content

Essential businesses during Alert Level 4

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Orders under section 70(1) of the Health Act 1956 define the term "essential businesses" as businesses that are essential to the provision of life and those businesses that support them as described on this website. This section describes what are essential businesses for the purpose of the Health Orders made under Section 70(1) of the Health Act 1956 in relation to COVID-19.

Information for business owners and employees

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Businesses by sector that are essential

The list below provides a sector-level overview of the types of business and functions that are able to remain open during Alert Level 4, including any critical suppliers in their supply chains, eg a firm repairing IT and data infrastructure for an essential service can remain in operation.

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This contents of this page will evolve over time.

The page was last updated at 4pm, 8 April 2020.

Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all physical interactions with others outside of your household.

[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Accommodation

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity that provides accommodation services for essential workers, isolation/quarantine, and emergency housing.
- Retirement villages.
- Backpackers accommodation.

[See Essential services for more information about backpackers accommodation](#)

Border

Lead agency: Customs New Zealand

- Customs New Zealand, Immigration New Zealand and the Ministry for Primary Industries.

Building and construction

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chain.
- Any entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elements.
- Any entity with statutory responsibilities or that is involved in building and resource consenting necessary for the above purposes.

[Updated information from the Construction sector can be found on the Building Performance website – this includes a comprehensive list of FAQs](#)

Courts, tribunals and the justice system

Lead agency: Ministry of Justice

- Courts of New Zealand, tribunals.
- Critical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).

Education

Lead agency: Ministry of Education

At Alert Level 4:

- Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT).

At Alert Level 3 only:

- 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

- 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.

[See Essential services for more information about food](#)

Financial services

Lead agencies: Financial Markets Authority and Reserve Bank of New Zealand

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.

[Guidance on essential financial services is available on the Reserve Bank website](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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).
- Emergency dental and optometry care services.
- Any entity providing ambulance services.
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries).
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[Guidance on essential services in the health and disability system is available on the Ministry of Health website](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Courts of New Zealand.

- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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 or 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, in the following categories:
 - Where the service is the only way for people to access food and other goods they need to live day-to-day.
 - A social service that provides and supports a place for someone to live.
 - A social service that supports disabled people to maintain critical wellbeing.
 - Crisis support for people who are unsafe.

[List of social sector organisations providing essential services on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers.
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services).
- 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 that 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).
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

[The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector on their website](#)

This may be updated as the response evolves.

[Advice from Customs New Zealand on essential and non-essential goods is available on their website](#)

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities.
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- Disposal of waste, including recycling, is an essential service and may continue to operate during Alert level 4. Individual operators have responsibilities to appropriately meet the health, safety, and security requirements of their staff and customers, and should not operate if they feel they cannot do so.
- News (including news production) and broadcast media is considered essential. Daily delivery of newspapers is considered essential. Non-daily newspapers for communities that are hard to reach due to physical location and with limited access to digital connectivity, or for non-English language material audiences are considered essential. Non-broadcast news organisations are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible. Magazines do not provide critical up-to date news information. The physical production, delivery and retail distribution of magazines is not considered an essential service. Magazines are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible.
- Security and cleaning of GLAM institutions: All galleries, libraries, archives and museums will remain closed to the public. Essential security and maintenance is permitted.
- Security is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- Internet service providers.
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains.
- Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services).
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

[Further guidance is available on the Ministry for Culture and Heritage website](#)

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

Additional decisions made about essential services

[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

[The conditions that businesses must comply with, and details on how to register your business](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 314

Hero statement: Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4. This means food, medicine, healthcare, energy, fuel, waste-removal, internet and financial support will continue to be available.

Content type: Standard page content

Essential businesses during Alert Level 4

Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all physical interactions with others outside of your household.

Orders under section 70(1) of the Health Act 1956 define the term "essential businesses" as businesses that are essential to the provision of life and those businesses that support them as described on this website. This section describes what are essential businesses for the purpose of the Health Orders made under Section 70(1) of the Health Act 1956 in relation to COVID-19.

Information for business owners and employees

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

[Employment guidance for businesses and workers](#)

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Businesses by sector that are essential

The list below provides a sector-level overview of the types of business and functions that are able to remain open during Alert Level 4, including any critical suppliers in their supply chains, eg a firm repairing IT and data infrastructure for an essential service can remain in operation.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can call [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

This contents of this page will evolve over time.

The page was last updated at 4pm, 8 April 2020.

Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all physical interactions with others outside of your household.

[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Accommodation

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity that provides accommodation services for essential workers, isolation/quarantine, and emergency housing.
- Retirement villages.
- Backpackers accommodation.

[See Essential services for more information about backpackers accommodation](#)

Border

Lead agency: Customs New Zealand

- Customs New Zealand, Immigration New Zealand and the Ministry for Primary Industries.

Building and construction

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chain.
- Any entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elements.
- Any entity with statutory responsibilities or that is involved in building and resource consenting necessary for the above purposes.

[Updated information from the Construction sector can be found on the Building Performance website – this includes a comprehensive list of FAQs](#)

Courts, tribunals and the justice system

Lead agency: Ministry of Justice

- Courts of New Zealand, tribunals.
- Critical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).

Protocols setting out the arrangements for each court, including arrangements made for remote appearances and the circumstances in which people may need to appear in person are in operation.

[Court protocols for COVID-19](#)

Education

Lead agency: Ministry of Education

At Alert Level 4:

- Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT).

At Alert Level 3 only:

- 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

- 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.

[See Essential services for more information about food](#)

Financial services

Lead agencies: Financial Markets Authority and Reserve Bank of New Zealand

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.

[Guidance on essential financial services is available on the Reserve Bank website](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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).
- Emergency dental and optometry care services.
- Any entity providing ambulance services.
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries).
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[Guidance on essential services in the health and disability system is available on the Ministry of Health website](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- Courts of New Zealand.
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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 or 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, in the following categories:
 - Where the service is the only way for people to access food and other goods they need to live day-to-day.
 - A social service that provides and supports a place for someone to live.
 - A social service that supports disabled people to maintain critical wellbeing.
 - Crisis support for people who are unsafe.

[List of social sector organisations providing essential services on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers.
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services).
- 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 that 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).

- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

[The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector on their website](#)

This may be updated as the response evolves.

[Advice from Customs New Zealand on essential and non-essential goods is available on their website](#)

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities.
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- Disposal of waste, including recycling, is an essential service and may continue to operate during Alert level 4. Individual operators have responsibilities to appropriately meet the health, safety, and security requirements of their staff and customers, and should not operate if they feel they cannot do so.
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- Security is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- Internet service providers.
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains.
- Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services).
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

[Further guidance is available on the Ministry for Culture and Heritage website](#)

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

Additional decisions made about essential services

[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

[The conditions that businesses must comply with, and details on how to register your business](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Publication date & time: 2020-04-09 20:40:12

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 316 (block version N/A)

Hero statement: Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4. This means food, medicine, healthcare, energy, fuel, waste-removal, internet and financial support will continue to be available.

Content type: Content blocks

The page was blank at this time, due to a content migration from standard content pages to content blocks.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 318 (block version 2)

Hero statement: Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4. This means food, medicine, healthcare, energy, fuel, waste-removal, internet and financial support will continue to be available.

Content type: Content blocks

Essential businesses during Alert Level 4

Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all physical interactions with others outside of your household.

Orders under section 70(1) of the Health Act 1956 define the term "essential businesses" as businesses that are essential to the provision of life and those businesses that support them as described on this website. This section describes what are essential businesses for the purpose of the Health Orders made under Section 70(1) of the Health Act 1956 in relation to COVID-19.

Information for business owners and employees

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

[Employment guidance for businesses and workers](#)

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Businesses by sector that are essential

The list below provides a sector-level overview of the types of business and functions that are able to remain open during Alert Level 4, including any critical suppliers in their supply chains, eg a firm repairing IT and data infrastructure for an essential service can remain in operation.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can call [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

This contents of this page will evolve over time.

The page was last updated at 4pm, 8 April 2020.

Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all physical interactions with others outside of your household.

[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Accommodation

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity that provides accommodation services for essential workers, isolation/quarantine, and emergency housing.
- Retirement villages.
- Backpackers accommodation.

[See Essential services for more information about backpackers accommodation](#)

Border

Lead agency: Customs New Zealand

- Customs New Zealand, Immigration New Zealand and the Ministry for Primary Industries.

Building and construction

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chain.
- Any entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elements.
- Any entity with statutory responsibilities or that is involved in building and resource consenting necessary for the above purposes.

[Updated information from the Construction sector can be found on the Building Performance website – this includes a comprehensive list of FAQs](#)

Courts, tribunals and the justice system

Lead agency: Ministry of Justice

- Courts of New Zealand, tribunals.
- Critical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).

Protocols setting out the arrangements for each court, including arrangements made for remote appearances and the circumstances in which people may need to appear in person are in operation.

[Court protocols for COVID-19](#)

Education

Lead agency: Ministry of Education

At Alert Level 4:

- Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT).

At Alert Level 3 only:

- 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

- 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.

[See Essential services for more information about food](#)

Financial services

Lead agencies: Financial Markets Authority and Reserve Bank of New Zealand

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.

[Guidance on essential financial services is available on the Reserve Bank website](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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).
- Emergency dental and optometry care services.
- Any entity providing ambulance services.
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries).
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[Guidance on essential services in the health and disability system is available on the Ministry of Health website](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- Courts of New Zealand.
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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 or 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, in the following categories:
 - Where the service is the only way for people to access food and other goods they need to live day-to-day.
 - A social service that provides and supports a place for someone to live.
 - A social service that supports disabled people to maintain critical wellbeing.
 - Crisis support for people who are unsafe.

[List of social sector organisations providing essential services on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers.
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services).
- 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 that 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).

- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

[The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector on their website](#)

This may be updated as the response evolves.

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Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities.
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- Security and cleaning of GLAM institutions: All galleries, libraries, archives and museums will remain closed to the public. Essential security and maintenance is permitted.
- Security is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- Internet service providers.
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains.
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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.

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[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

[The conditions that businesses must comply with, and details on how to register your business](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 320 (block version 5)

Hero statement: Essential businesses, and those that support them, will continue to provide the necessities of life for everyone in New Zealand during Alert Level 4. This means food, medicine, healthcare, energy, fuel, waste-removal, internet and financial support will continue to be available.

Content type: Content blocks

Essential businesses during Alert Level 4

Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all physical interactions with others outside of your household.

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- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

[Employment guidance for businesses and workers](#)

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Businesses by sector that are essential

The list below provides a sector-level overview of the types of business and functions that are able to remain open during Alert Level 4, including any critical suppliers in their supply chains, eg a firm repairing IT and data infrastructure for an essential service can remain in operation.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can call [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

This contents of this page will evolve over time.

The page was last updated at 4pm, 8 April 2020.

Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all physical interactions with others outside of your household.

[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Accommodation

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity that provides accommodation services for essential workers, isolation/quarantine, and emergency housing.
- Retirement villages.
- Backpackers accommodation.

[See Essential services for more information about backpackers accommodation](#)

Border

Lead agency: Customs New Zealand

- Customs New Zealand, Immigration New Zealand and the Ministry for Primary Industries.

Building and construction

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chain.
- Any entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elements.
- Any entity with statutory responsibilities or that is involved in building and resource consenting necessary for the above purposes.

[Updated information from the Construction sector can be found on the Building Performance website – this includes a comprehensive list of FAQs](#)

Courts, tribunals and the justice system

Lead agency: Ministry of Justice

- Courts of New Zealand, tribunals.
- Critical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).

Protocols setting out the arrangements for each court, including arrangements made for remote appearances and the circumstances in which people may need to appear in person are in operation.

[Court protocols for COVID-19](#)

Education

Lead agency: Ministry of Education

At Alert Level 4:

- Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT).

At Alert Level 3 only:

- 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

- 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.

[See Essential services for more information about food](#)

Financial services

Lead agencies: Financial Markets Authority and Reserve Bank of New Zealand

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.

[Guidance on essential financial services is available on the Reserve Bank website](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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).
- Emergency dental and optometry care services.
- Any entity providing ambulance services.
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries).
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[Guidance on essential services in the health and disability system is available on the Ministry of Health website](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- Courts of New Zealand.
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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 or 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, in the following categories:
 - Where the service is the only way for people to access food and other goods they need to live day-to-day.
 - A social service that provides and supports a place for someone to live.
 - A social service that supports disabled people to maintain critical wellbeing.
 - Crisis support for people who are unsafe.

[List of social sector organisations providing essential services on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers.
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services).
- 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 that 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).

- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

[The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector on their website](#)

This may be updated as the response evolves.

[Advice from Customs New Zealand on essential and non-essential goods is available on their website](#)

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities.
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- Disposal of waste, including recycling, is an essential service and may continue to operate during Alert level 4. Individual operators have responsibilities to appropriately meet the health, safety, and security requirements of their staff and customers, and should not operate if they feel they cannot do so.
- News (including news production) and broadcast media is considered essential. Daily delivery of newspapers is considered essential. Non-daily newspapers for communities that are hard to reach due to physical location and with limited access to digital connectivity, or for non-English language material audiences are considered essential. Non-broadcast news organisations are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible. Magazines do not provide critical up-to date news information. The physical production, delivery and retail distribution of magazines is not considered an essential service. Magazines are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible.
- Security and cleaning of GLAM institutions: All galleries, libraries, archives and museums will remain closed to the public. Essential security and maintenance is permitted.
- Security is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- Internet service providers.
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains.
- Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services).
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

[Further guidance is available on the Ministry for Culture and Heritage website](#)

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

Additional decisions made about essential services

[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

[The conditions that businesses must comply with, and details on how to register your business](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 322 (block version 7)

Hero statement: Guidance on how to operate your business, and a list of businesses by sector that are essential.

Content type: Content blocks

Essential businesses during Alert Level 4

Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all physical interactions with others outside of your household.

Orders under section 70(1) of the Health Act 1956 define the term "essential businesses" as businesses that are essential to the provision of life and those businesses that support them as described on this website. This section describes what are essential businesses for the purpose of the Health Orders made under Section 70(1) of the Health Act 1956 in relation to COVID-19.

Information for business owners and employees

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

[Employment guidance for businesses and workers](#)

[Health and safety guidance work essential workplaces](#)

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Businesses by sector that are essential

The list below provides a sector-level overview of the types of business and functions that are able to remain open during Alert Level 4, including any critical suppliers in their supply chains, eg a firm repairing IT and data infrastructure for an essential service can remain in operation.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can call [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

This contents of this page will evolve over time.

The page was last updated at 4pm, 8 April 2020.

Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all physical interactions with others outside of your household.

[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Accommodation

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity that provides accommodation services for essential workers, isolation/quarantine, and emergency housing.
- Retirement villages.
- Backpackers accommodation.

[See Essential services for more information about backpackers accommodation](#)

Border

Lead agency: Customs New Zealand

- Customs New Zealand, Immigration New Zealand and the Ministry for Primary Industries.

Building and construction

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chain.
- Any entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elements.
- Any entity with statutory responsibilities or that is involved in building and resource consenting necessary for the above purposes.

[Updated information from the Construction sector can be found on the Building Performance website – this includes a comprehensive list of FAQs](#)

Courts, tribunals and the justice system

Lead agency: Ministry of Justice

- Courts of New Zealand, tribunals.
- Critical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).

Protocols setting out the arrangements for each court, including arrangements made for remote appearances and the circumstances in which people may need to appear in person are in operation.

[Court protocols for COVID-19](#)

Education

Lead agency: Ministry of Education

At Alert Level 4:

- Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT).

At Alert Level 3 only:

- 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

- 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.

[See Essential services for more information about food](#)

Financial services

Lead agencies: Financial Markets Authority and Reserve Bank of New Zealand

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including

banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.

[Guidance on essential financial services is available on the Reserve Bank website](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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).
- Emergency dental and optometry care services.
- Any entity providing ambulance services.
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries).
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[Guidance on essential services in the health and disability system is available on the Ministry of Health website](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- Courts of New Zealand.
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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 or 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, in the following categories:
 - Where the service is the only way for people to access food and other goods they need to live day-to-day.
 - A social service that provides and supports a place for someone to live.
 - A social service that supports disabled people to maintain critical wellbeing.
 - Crisis support for people who are unsafe.

[List of social sector organisations providing essential services on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers.
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services).
- 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 that 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).

- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

[The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector on their website](#)

This may be updated as the response evolves.

[Advice from Customs New Zealand on essential and non-essential goods is available on their website](#)

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities.
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- News (including news production) and broadcast media is considered essential. Daily delivery of newspapers is considered essential. Non-daily newspapers for communities that are hard to reach due to physical location and with limited access to digital connectivity, or for non-English language material audiences are considered essential. Non-broadcast news organisations are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible. Magazines do not provide critical up-to date news information. The physical production, delivery and retail distribution of magazines is not considered an essential service. Magazines are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible.
- Security and cleaning of GLAM institutions: All galleries, libraries, archives and museums will remain closed to the public. Essential security and maintenance is permitted.
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- Internet service providers.
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains.
- Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services).
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

[Further guidance is available on the Ministry for Culture and Heritage website](#)

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

Additional decisions made about essential services

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Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

[The conditions that businesses must comply with, and details on how to register your business](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 324 (block version 7)

Hero statement: Guidance on how to operate your business, and a list of businesses by sector that are essential.

Content type: Content blocks

Essential businesses during Alert Level 4

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Information for business owners and employees

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- restrict activity to only what is essential during the Alert Level 4 period.

These practices may include:

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- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

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[Employment guidance for businesses and workers](#)

[Health and safety guidance work essential workplaces](#)

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Accommodation

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity that provides accommodation services for essential workers, isolation/quarantine, and emergency housing.
- Retirement villages.
- Backpackers accommodation.

[See Essential services for more information about backpackers accommodation](#)

Border

Lead agency: Customs New Zealand

- Customs New Zealand, Immigration New Zealand and the Ministry for Primary Industries.

Building and construction

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chain.
- Any entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elements.
- Any entity with statutory responsibilities or that is involved in building and resource consenting necessary for the above purposes.

[Updated information from the Construction sector can be found on the Building Performance website – this includes a comprehensive list of FAQs](#)

Courts, tribunals and the justice system

Lead agency: Ministry of Justice

- Courts of New Zealand, tribunals.
- Critical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).

Protocols setting out the arrangements for each court, including arrangements made for remote appearances and the circumstances in which people may need to appear in person are in operation.

[Court protocols for COVID-19](#)

Education

Lead agency: Ministry of Education

At Alert Level 4:

- Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT).

At Alert Level 3 only:

- 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

- 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.

[See Essential services for more information about food](#)

Financial services

Lead agencies: Financial Markets Authority and Reserve Bank of New Zealand

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including

banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.

[Guidance on essential financial services is available on the Reserve Bank website](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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).
- Emergency dental and optometry care services.
- Any entity providing ambulance services.
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries).
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[Guidance on essential services in the health and disability system is available on the Ministry of Health website](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

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Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- Courts of New Zealand.
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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 or 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, in the following categories:
 - Where the service is the only way for people to access food and other goods they need to live day-to-day.
 - A social service that provides and supports a place for someone to live.
 - A social service that supports disabled people to maintain critical wellbeing.
 - Crisis support for people who are unsafe.

[List of social sector organisations providing essential services on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers.
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services).
- 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 that 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).

- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

[The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector on their website](#)

This may be updated as the response evolves.

[Advice from Customs New Zealand on essential and non-essential goods is available on their website](#)

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities.
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- Disposal of waste, including recycling, is an essential service and may continue to operate during Alert level 4. Individual operators have responsibilities to appropriately meet the health, safety, and security requirements of their staff and customers, and should not operate if they feel they cannot do so.
- News (including news production) and broadcast media is considered essential. Daily delivery of newspapers is considered essential. Non-daily newspapers for communities that are hard to reach due to physical location and with limited access to digital connectivity, or for non-English language material audiences are considered essential. Non-broadcast news organisations are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible. Magazines do not provide critical up-to date news information. The physical production, delivery and retail distribution of magazines is not considered an essential service. Magazines are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible.
- Security and cleaning of GLAM institutions: All galleries, libraries, archives and museums will remain closed to the public. Essential security and maintenance is permitted.
- Security is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- Internet service providers.
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains.
- Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services).
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

[Further guidance is available on the Ministry for Culture and Heritage website](#)

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

Additional decisions made about essential services

[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

[The conditions that businesses must comply with, and details on how to register your business](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 324 (block version 9)

Hero statement: Guidance on how to operate your business, and a list of businesses by sector that are essential.

Content type: Content blocks

Essential businesses during Alert Level 4

Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all physical interactions with others outside of your household.

Orders under section 70(1) of the Health Act 1956 define the term "essential businesses" as businesses that are essential to the provision of life and those businesses that support them as described on this website. This section describes what are essential businesses for the purpose of the Health Orders made under Section 70(1) of the Health Act 1956 in relation to COVID-19.

Information for business owners and employees

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, eg through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, eg 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

[Employment guidance for businesses and workers](#)

[Health and safety guidance work essential workplaces](#)

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Businesses by sector that are essential

The list below provides a sector-level overview of the types of business and functions that are able to remain open during Alert Level 4, including any critical suppliers in their supply chains, eg a firm repairing IT and data infrastructure for an essential service can remain in operation.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can call [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

This contents of this page will evolve over time.

The page was last updated at 4pm, 8 April 2020.

Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all physical interactions with others outside of your household.

[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Accommodation

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity that provides accommodation services for essential workers, isolation/quarantine, and emergency housing.
- Retirement villages.
- Backpackers accommodation.

[See Essential services for more information about backpackers accommodation](#)

Border

Lead agency: Customs New Zealand

- Customs New Zealand, Immigration New Zealand and the Ministry for Primary Industries.

Building and construction

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chain.
- Any entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elements.
- Any entity with statutory responsibilities or that is involved in building and resource consenting necessary for the above purposes.

[Updated information from the Construction sector can be found on the Building Performance website – this includes a comprehensive list of FAQs](#)

Courts, tribunals and the justice system

Lead agency: Ministry of Justice

- Courts of New Zealand, tribunals.
- Critical Crown entities (eg Electoral Commission).

Protocols setting out the arrangements for each court, including arrangements made for remote appearances and the circumstances in which people may need to appear in person are in operation.

[Court protocols for COVID-19](#)

Education

Lead agency: Ministry of Education

At Alert Level 4:

- Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT).

At Alert Level 3 only:

- 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

- 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.

[See Essential services for more information about food](#)

Financial services

Lead agencies: Financial Markets Authority and Reserve Bank of New Zealand

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including

banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.

[Guidance on essential financial services is available on the Reserve Bank website](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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).
- Emergency dental and optometry care services.
- Any entity providing ambulance services.
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku (eg funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries).
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[Guidance on essential services in the health and disability system is available on the Ministry of Health website](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- Courts of New Zealand.
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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 or public health.
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- 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.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, in the following categories:
 - Where the service is the only way for people to access food and other goods they need to live day-to-day.
 - A social service that provides and supports a place for someone to live.
 - A social service that supports disabled people to maintain critical wellbeing.
 - Crisis support for people who are unsafe.

[List of social sector organisations providing essential services on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers.
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes (eg vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services).
- 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.
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- Any entity which provides services related to the maintenance and ongoing operation of critical infrastructure (eg roads, rail, ports, airports).
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service (under contract with a Regional Council).

- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs (eg home heating) or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

[The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector on their website](#)

This may be updated as the response evolves.

[Advice from Customs New Zealand on essential and non-essential goods is available on their website](#)

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater (eg sanitation), waste (eg rubbish collection and recycling), liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities.
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- Internet service providers.
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains.
- Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace (eg cleaning, security services).
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic (eg lifts, stairwells).

[Further guidance is available on the Ministry for Culture and Heritage website](#)

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

Additional decisions made about essential services

[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

[The conditions that businesses must comply with, and details on how to register your business](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 324 (block version 12)

Hero statement: Guidance on how to operate your business, and a list of businesses by sector that are essential.

Content type: Content blocks

Essential businesses during Alert Level 4

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Orders under section 70(1) of the Health Act 1956 define the term "essential businesses" as businesses that are essential to the provision of life and those businesses that support them as described on this website. This section describes what are essential businesses for the purpose of the Health Orders made under Section 70(1) of the Health Act 1956 in relation to COVID-19.

Information for business owners and employees

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If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, for example through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, for example 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

[Employment guidance for businesses and workers](#)

[Health and safety guidance work essential workplaces](#)

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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.

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We need your support to protect New Zealand and slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Businesses by sector that are essential

The list below provides a sector-level overview of the types of business and functions that can remain open during Alert Level 4. This includes any critical suppliers in their supply chains, for example a firm repairing IT and data infrastructure for an essential service can remain in operation.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can call [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

This contents of this page will evolve over time.

The page was last updated at 4pm, 8 April 2020.

Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all physical interactions with others outside of your household.

[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Accommodation

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity that provides accommodation services for essential workers, isolation/quarantine, and emergency housing.
- Retirement villages.
- Backpackers accommodation.

[See Essential services for more information about backpackers accommodation](#)

Border

Lead agency: Customs New Zealand

- Customs New Zealand, Immigration New Zealand and the Ministry for Primary Industries.

Building and construction

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chain.
- Any entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elements.
- Any entity with statutory responsibilities or that is involved in building and resource consenting necessary for the above purposes.

[Updated information from the Construction sector can be found on the Building Performance website – this includes a comprehensive list of FAQs](#)

Courts, tribunals and the justice system

Lead agency: Ministry of Justice

- Courts of New Zealand, tribunals.
- Critical Crown entities, for example, the Electoral Commission.

Protocols setting out the arrangements for each court, including arrangements made for remote appearances and the circumstances in which people may need to appear in person are in operation.

[Court protocols for COVID-19](#)

Education

Lead agency: Ministry of Education

At Alert Level 4:

- Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT).

At Alert Level 3 only:

- Any person employed or contracted as teaching, nursery and childcare staff, including specialist education professionals and others who provide support, for example to disabled children.
- Any person employed by or contracted to an educational facility.
- Any entity supplying educational facilities or educational materials, for example eg printers.

Fast-moving consumer goods

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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.

[See Essential services for more information about food](#)

Financial services

Lead agencies: Financial Markets Authority and Reserve Bank of New Zealand

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including

banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.

[Guidance on essential financial services is available on the Reserve Bank website](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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, for example rest homes.
- Emergency dental and optometry care services.
- Any entity providing ambulance services.
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku, for example funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries.
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[Guidance on essential services in the health and disability system is available on the Ministry of Health website](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- Any entity involved in the packaging, production and processing of food and beverage products, whether for domestic consumption or export.
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- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- Courts of New Zealand.
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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 or 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, for example samples, collections and storage facilities) that are important to New Zealand.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, in the following categories:
 - Where the service is the only way for people to access food and other goods they need to live day-to-day.
 - A social service that provides and supports a place for someone to live.
 - A social service that supports disabled people to maintain critical wellbeing.
 - Crisis support for people who are unsafe.

[List of social sector organisations providing essential services on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers.
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes, for example vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services.
- 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 that 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, for example 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

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- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs, for example home heating or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

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This may be updated as the response evolves.

[Advice from Customs New Zealand on essential and non-essential goods is available on their website](#)

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater, for example sanitation, waste, for example rubbish collection and recycling, liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities.
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- Security and cleaning of GLAM institutions: All galleries, libraries, archives and museums will remain closed to the public. Essential security and maintenance are permitted.
- Security is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- Internet service providers.
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains.
- Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace, for example cleaning, security services.
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic, for example lifts, stairwells.

[Further guidance is available on the Ministry for Culture and Heritage website](#)

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

Additional decisions made about essential services

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[The conditions that businesses must comply with, and details on how to register your business](#)

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Hero statement: Guidance on how to operate your business, and a list of businesses by sector that are essential.

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Essential businesses during Alert Level 4

Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all physical interactions with others outside of your household.

Orders under section 70(1) of the Health Act 1956 define the term "essential businesses" as businesses that are essential to the provision of life and those businesses that support them as described on this website. This section describes what are essential businesses for the purpose of the Health Orders made under Section 70(1) of the Health Act 1956 in relation to COVID-19.

Information for business owners and employees

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff, for example through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, for example 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

[Employment guidance for businesses and workers](#)

[Health and safety guidance work essential workplaces](#)

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Businesses by sector that are essential

The list below provides a sector-level overview of the types of business and functions that can remain open during Alert Level 4. This includes any critical suppliers in their supply chains, for example a firm repairing IT and data infrastructure for an essential service can remain in operation.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can call [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

This contents of this page will evolve over time.

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[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Accommodation

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity that provides accommodation services for essential workers, isolation/quarantine, and emergency housing.
- Retirement villages.
- Backpackers accommodation.

[See Essential services for more information about backpackers accommodation](#)

Border

Lead agency: Customs New Zealand

- Customs New Zealand, Immigration New Zealand and the Ministry for Primary Industries.

Building and construction

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chain.
- Any entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elements.
- Any entity with statutory responsibilities or that is involved in building and resource consenting necessary for the above purposes.

[Updated information from the Construction sector can be found on the Building Performance website – this includes a comprehensive list of FAQs](#)

Courts, tribunals and the justice system

Lead agency: Ministry of Justice

- Courts of New Zealand, tribunals.
- Critical Crown entities, for example, the Electoral Commission.

Protocols setting out the arrangements for each court, including arrangements made for remote appearances and the circumstances in which people may need to appear in person are in operation.

[Court protocols for COVID-19](#)

Education

Lead agency: Ministry of Education

At Alert Level 4:

- Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning (eg printers, devices, IT).

At Alert Level 3 only:

- Any person employed or contracted as teaching, nursery and childcare staff, including specialist education professionals and others who provide support, for example to disabled children.
- Any person employed by or contracted to an educational facility.
- Any entity supplying educational facilities or educational materials, for example eg printers.

Fast-moving consumer goods

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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.

[See Essential services for more information about food](#)

Financial services

Lead agencies: Financial Markets Authority and Reserve Bank of New Zealand

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including

banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.

[Guidance on essential financial services is available on the Reserve Bank website](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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, for example rest homes.
- Emergency dental and optometry care services.
- Any entity providing ambulance services.
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku, for example funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries.
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[Guidance on essential services in the health and disability system is available on the Ministry of Health website](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- Courts of New Zealand.
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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 or 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, for example samples, collections and storage facilities) that are important to New Zealand.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, in the following categories:
 - Where the service is the only way for people to access food and other goods they need to live day-to-day.
 - A social service that provides and supports a place for someone to live.
 - A social service that supports disabled people to maintain critical wellbeing.
 - Crisis support for people who are unsafe.

[List of social sector organisations providing essential services on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers.
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes, for example vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services.
- 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 that 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, for example 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).

- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs, for example home heating or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

[The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector on their website](#)

This may be updated as the response evolves.

[Advice from Customs New Zealand on essential and non-essential goods is available on their website](#)

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater, for example sanitation, waste, for example rubbish collection and recycling, liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities.
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs, for example home heating or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- Disposal of waste, including recycling, is an essential service and may continue to operate during Alert Level 4. Individual operators have responsibilities to appropriately meet the health, safety, and security requirements of their staff and customers, and should not operate if they feel they cannot do so.
- News (including news production) and broadcast media are considered essential. Daily delivery of newspapers is considered essential. Non-daily newspapers for communities that are hard to reach due to physical location and with limited access to digital connectivity, or for non-English language material audiences are considered essential. Non-broadcast news organisations are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible. Magazines do not provide critical up-to-date news information. The physical production, delivery and retail distribution of magazines are not considered an essential service. Magazines are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible.
- Security and cleaning of GLAM institutions: All galleries, libraries, archives and museums will remain closed to the public. Essential security and maintenance are permitted.
- Security is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- Internet service providers.
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains.
- Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace, for example cleaning, security services.
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic, for example lifts, stairwells.

[Further guidance is available on the Ministry for Culture and Heritage website](#)

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

Additional decisions made about essential services

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Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

[The conditions that businesses must comply with, and details on how to register your business](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 324 (block version 16)

Hero statement: Guidance on how to operate your business, and a list of businesses by sector that are essential.

Content type: Content blocks

Essential businesses during Alert Level 4

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[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Accommodation

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity that provides accommodation services for essential workers, isolation/quarantine, and emergency housing.
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- Backpackers accommodation.

[See Essential services for more information about backpackers accommodation](#)

Border

Lead agency: Customs New Zealand

- Customs New Zealand, Immigration New Zealand and the Ministry for Primary Industries.

Building and construction

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chain.
- Any entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elements.
- Any entity with statutory responsibilities or that is involved in building and resource consenting necessary for the above purposes.

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Lead agency: Ministry of Justice

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Education

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At Alert Level 4:

- Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning, such as printers, devices, IT.

At Alert Level 3 only:

- Any person employed or contracted as teaching, nursery and childcare staff, including specialist education professionals and others who provide support, for example to disabled children.
- Any person employed by or contracted to an educational facility.
- Any entity supplying educational facilities or educational materials, for example eg printers.

Fast-moving consumer goods

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- 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.

[See Essential services for more information about food](#)

Financial services

Lead agencies: Financial Markets Authority and Reserve Bank of New Zealand

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including

banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.

[Guidance on essential financial services is available on the Reserve Bank website](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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.
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- Emergency dental and optometry care services.
- Any entity providing ambulance services.
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku, for example funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries.
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

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Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

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Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

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- Any entity whose closure would jeopardise the maintenance of animal health or welfare standards (including the short-term survival of a species).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- Courts of New Zealand.
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- ESR, GNS, GeoNet, NIWA, MetService.
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- Any entity (including research organisations) involved in hazard monitoring and resilience.
- Any entity (including research organisations) involved in diagnostics for essential services like biosecurity or 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.
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[List of social sector organisations providing essential services on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers.
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- 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 that 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, for example roads, rail, ports, airports.
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Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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 like rest homes.
- Emergency dental and optometry care services.
- Any entity providing ambulance services.
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku, for example funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries.
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[Guidance on essential services in the health and disability system is available on the Ministry of Health website](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- Courts of New Zealand.
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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 or 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, for example samples, collections and storage facilities that are important to New Zealand.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, in the following categories:
 - Where the service is the only way for people to access food and other goods they need to live day-to-day.
 - A social service that provides and supports a place for someone to live.
 - A social service that supports disabled people to maintain critical wellbeing.
 - Crisis support for people who are unsafe.

[List of social sector organisations providing essential services on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers.
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes, such as vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services.
- 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 that 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, for example 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).

- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs, such as home heating or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

[The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector on their website](#)

This may be updated as the response evolves.

[Advice from Customs New Zealand on essential and non-essential goods is available on their website](#)

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater, for example sanitation, waste, rubbish collection and recycling, liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities.
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs, such as home heating or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- Disposal of waste, including recycling, is an essential service and may continue to operate during Alert Level 4. Individual operators have responsibilities to appropriately meet the health, safety, and security requirements of their staff and customers, and should not operate if they feel they cannot do so.
- News (including news production) and broadcast media are considered essential. Daily delivery of newspapers is considered essential. Non-daily newspapers for communities that are hard to reach due to physical location and with limited access to digital connectivity, or for non-English language material audiences are considered essential. Non-broadcast news organisations are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible. Magazines do not provide critical up-to-date news information. The physical production, delivery and retail distribution of magazines are not considered an essential service. Magazines are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible.
- Security and cleaning of GLAM institutions: All galleries, libraries, archives and museums will remain closed to the public. Essential security and maintenance are permitted.
- Security is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- Internet service providers.
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains.
- Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace, such as cleaning, security services.
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic like lifts, stairwells.

[Further guidance is available on the Ministry for Culture and Heritage website](#)

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

Additional decisions made about essential services

[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

[The conditions that businesses must comply with, and details on how to register your business](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 324 (block version 20)

Hero statement: Guidance on how to operate your business, and a list of businesses by sector that are essential.

Content type: Content blocks

Essential businesses during Alert Level 4

Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all physical interactions with others outside of your household.

Orders under section 70(1) of the Health Act 1956 define the term "essential businesses" as businesses that are essential to the provision of life and those businesses that support them as described on this website. This section describes what are essential businesses for the purpose of the Health Orders made under Section 70(1) of the Health Act 1956 in relation to COVID-19.

Information for business owners and employees

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff such as through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, for example 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

[Employment guidance for businesses and workers](#)

[Health and safety guidance work essential workplaces](#)

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Businesses by sector that are essential

The list below provides a sector-level overview of the types of business and functions that can remain open during Alert Level 4. This includes any critical suppliers in their supply chains, such as a firm repairing IT and data infrastructure for an essential service can remain in operation.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can call [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

This contents of this page will evolve over time.

The page was last updated at 4pm, 8 April 2020.

Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all physical interactions with others outside of your household.

[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Accommodation

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity that provides accommodation services for essential workers, isolation/quarantine, and emergency housing.
- Retirement villages.
- Backpackers accommodation.

[See Essential services for more information about backpackers accommodation](#)

Border

Lead agency: Customs New Zealand

- Customs New Zealand, Immigration New Zealand and the Ministry for Primary Industries.

Building and construction

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chain.
- Any entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elements.
- Any entity with statutory responsibilities or that is involved in building and resource consenting necessary for the above purposes.

[Updated information from the Construction sector can be found on the Building Performance website – this includes a comprehensive list of FAQs](#)

Courts, tribunals and the justice system

Lead agency: Ministry of Justice

- Courts of New Zealand, tribunals.
- Critical Crown entities, for example, the Electoral Commission.

Protocols setting out the arrangements for each court, including arrangements made for remote appearances and the circumstances in which people may need to appear in person are in operation.

[Court protocols for COVID-19](#)

Education

Lead agency: Ministry of Education

At Alert Level 4:

- Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning, such as printers, devices, IT.

At Alert Level 3 only:

- Any person employed or contracted as teaching, nursery and childcare staff, including specialist education professionals and others who provide support, for example to disabled children.
- Any person employed by or contracted to an educational facility.
- Any entity supplying educational facilities or educational materials, for example eg printers.

Fast-moving consumer goods

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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.

[See Essential services for more information about food](#)

Financial services

Lead agencies: Financial Markets Authority and Reserve Bank of New Zealand

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including

banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.

[Guidance on essential financial services is available on the Reserve Bank website](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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 like rest homes.
- Emergency dental and optometry care services.
- Any entity providing ambulance services.
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku, for example funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries.
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[Guidance on essential services in the health and disability system is available on the Ministry of Health website](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- Courts of New Zealand.
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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 or 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, for example samples, collections and storage facilities that are important to New Zealand.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, in the following categories:
 - Where the service is the only way for people to access food and other goods they need to live day-to-day.
 - A social service that provides and supports a place for someone to live.
 - A social service that supports disabled people to maintain critical wellbeing.
 - Crisis support for people who are unsafe.

[List of social sector organisations providing essential services on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers.
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes, such as vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services.
- 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 that 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, for example 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).

- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs, such as home heating or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

[The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector on their website](#)

This may be updated as the response evolves.

[Advice from Customs New Zealand on essential and non-essential goods is available on their website](#)

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater, for example sanitation, waste, rubbish collection and recycling, liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities.
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs, such as home heating or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- Disposal of waste, including recycling, is an essential service and may continue to operate during Alert Level 4. Individual operators have responsibilities to appropriately meet the health, safety, and security requirements of their staff and customers, and should not operate if they feel they cannot do so.
- News (including news production) and broadcast media are considered essential. Daily delivery of newspapers is considered essential. Non-daily newspapers for communities that are hard to reach due to physical location and with limited access to digital connectivity, or for non-English language material audiences are considered essential. Non-broadcast news organisations are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible. Magazines do not provide critical up-to-date news information. The physical production, delivery and retail distribution of magazines are not considered an essential service. Magazines are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible.
- To assist in the transition from COVID-19 Alert Level 4 to Alert Level 3, non-daily print publications (excluding delivery) may resume production before the start of Alert Level 3 under certain conditions set out below. This recognises that non-daily print publications may provide their communities with a broader range of content not deemed essential for Level 4 but useful under Level 3 (e.g., local business information). Further, the lead in time required for production of non-daily print publications is lengthy and early resumption will assist in enabling this information to be available in a timely manner as New Zealand transitions to Level 3. Non-daily print publications may commence production prior to 11.59pm Monday 27 April but are required to:
 - Implement a safety plan as set out on the WorkSafe website.
 - Limit print production services to those that are currently operational (eg, those print suppliers that operated under Level 4 for production of daily publications).
- Security and cleaning of GLAM institutions: All galleries, libraries, archives and museums will remain closed to the public. Essential security and maintenance are permitted.
- Security is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- Internet service providers.
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains.
- Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace, such as cleaning, security services.
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic like lifts, stairwells.

[Further guidance is available on the Ministry for Culture and Heritage website](#)

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

Additional decisions made about essential services

[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

[The conditions that businesses must comply with, and details on how to register your business](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 324 (block version 22)

Hero statement: Guidance on how to operate your business, and a list of businesses by sector that are essential.

Content type: Content blocks

Essential businesses during Alert Level 4

Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all physical interactions with others outside of your household.

Orders under section 70(1) of the Health Act 1956 define the term "essential businesses" as businesses that are essential to the provision of life and those businesses that support them as described on this website. This section describes what are essential businesses for the purpose of the Health Orders made under Section 70(1) of the Health Act 1956 in relation to COVID-19.

Information for business owners and employees

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff such as through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, for example 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

[Employment guidance for businesses and workers](#)

[Health and safety guidance work essential workplaces](#)

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Businesses by sector that are essential

The list below provides a sector-level overview of the types of business and functions that can remain open during Alert Level 4. This includes any critical suppliers in their supply chains, such as a firm repairing IT and data infrastructure for an essential service can remain in operation.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can call [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

This contents of this page will evolve over time.

The page was last updated at 4pm, 8 April 2020.

Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all physical interactions with others outside of your household.

[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Accommodation

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity that provides accommodation services for essential workers, isolation/quarantine, and emergency housing.
- Retirement villages.
- Backpackers accommodation.

[See Essential services for more information about backpackers accommodation](#)

Border

Lead agency: Customs New Zealand

- Customs New Zealand, Immigration New Zealand and the Ministry for Primary Industries.

Building and construction

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chain.
- Any entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elements.
- Any entity with statutory responsibilities or that is involved in building and resource consenting necessary for the above purposes.

[Updated information from the Construction sector can be found on the Building Performance website – this includes a comprehensive list of FAQs](#)

Courts, tribunals and the justice system

Lead agency: Ministry of Justice

- Courts of New Zealand, tribunals.
- Critical Crown entities, for example, the Electoral Commission.

Protocols setting out the arrangements for each court, including arrangements made for remote appearances and the circumstances in which people may need to appear in person are in operation.

[Court protocols for COVID-19](#)

Education

Lead agency: Ministry of Education

At Alert Level 4:

- Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning, such as printers, devices, IT.

At Alert Level 3 only:

- Any person employed or contracted as teaching, nursery and childcare staff, including specialist education professionals and others who provide support, for example to disabled children.
- Any person employed by or contracted to an educational facility.
- Any entity supplying educational facilities or educational materials like printers.

Fast-moving consumer goods

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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.

[See Essential services for more information about food](#)

Financial services

Lead agencies: Financial Markets Authority and Reserve Bank of New Zealand

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including

banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.

[Guidance on essential financial services is available on the Reserve Bank website](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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 like rest homes.
- Emergency dental and optometry care services.
- Any entity providing ambulance services.
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku, for example funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries.
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[Guidance on essential services in the health and disability system is available on the Ministry of Health website](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- Courts of New Zealand.
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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 or 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, for example samples, collections and storage facilities that are important to New Zealand.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, in the following categories:
 - Where the service is the only way for people to access food and other goods they need to live day-to-day.
 - A social service that provides and supports a place for someone to live.
 - A social service that supports disabled people to maintain critical wellbeing.
 - Crisis support for people who are unsafe.

[List of social sector organisations providing essential services on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers.
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes, such as vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services.
- 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 that 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, for example 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).

- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs, such as home heating or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

[The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector on their website](#)

This may be updated as the response evolves.

[Advice from Customs New Zealand on essential and non-essential goods is available on their website](#)

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater, for example sanitation, waste, rubbish collection and recycling, liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities.
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs, such as home heating or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- Disposal of waste, including recycling, is an essential service and may continue to operate during Alert Level 4. Individual operators have responsibilities to appropriately meet the health, safety, and security requirements of their staff and customers, and should not operate if they feel they cannot do so.
- News (including news production) and broadcast media are considered essential. Daily delivery of newspapers is considered essential. Non-daily newspapers for communities that are hard to reach due to physical location and with limited access to digital connectivity, or for non-English language material audiences are considered essential. Non-broadcast news organisations are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible. Magazines do not provide critical up-to-date news information. The physical production, delivery and retail distribution of magazines are not considered an essential service. Magazines are encouraged to deliver services online wherever possible.
- To assist in the transition from COVID-19 Alert Level 4 to Alert Level 3, non-daily print publications (excluding delivery) may resume production before the start of Alert Level 3 under certain conditions set out below. This recognises that non-daily print publications may provide their communities with a broader range of content not deemed essential for Level 4 but useful under Level 3 (e.g., local business information). Further, the lead in time required for production of non-daily print publications is lengthy and early resumption will assist in enabling this information to be available in a timely manner as New Zealand transitions to Level 3. Non-daily print publications may commence production prior to 11.59pm Monday 27 April but are required to:
 - Implement a safety plan as set out on the WorkSafe website.
 - Limit print production services to those that are currently operational, for example, those print suppliers that operated under Level 4 for production of daily publications).
- Security and cleaning of GLAM institutions: All galleries, libraries, archives and museums will remain closed to the public. Essential security and maintenance are permitted.
- Security is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- Internet service providers.
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains.
- Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace, such as cleaning, security services.
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic like lifts, stairwells.

[Further guidance is available on the Ministry for Culture and Heritage website](#)

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

Additional decisions made about essential services

[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

[The conditions that businesses must comply with, and details on how to register your business](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 324 (block version 24)

Hero statement: Guidance on how to operate your business, and a list of businesses by sector that are essential.

Content type: Content blocks

Essential businesses during Alert Level 4

Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all physical interactions with others outside of your household.

Orders under section 70(1) of the Health Act 1956 define the term "essential businesses" as businesses that are essential to the provision of life and those businesses that support them as described on this website. This section describes what are essential businesses for the purpose of the Health Orders made under Section 70(1) of the Health Act 1956 in relation to COVID-19.

Information for business owners and employees

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff such as through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, for example 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

[Employment guidance for businesses and workers](#)

[Health and safety guidance work essential workplaces](#)

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Businesses by sector that are essential

The list below provides a sector-level overview of the types of business and functions that can remain open during Alert Level 4. This includes any critical suppliers in their supply chains, such as a firm repairing IT and data infrastructure for an essential service can remain in operation.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can call [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

This contents of this page will evolve over time.

The page was last updated at 4pm, 8 April 2020.

Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all physical interactions with others outside of your household.

[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Accommodation

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity that provides accommodation services for essential workers, isolation/quarantine, and emergency housing.
- Retirement villages.
- Backpackers accommodation.

[See Essential services for more information about backpackers accommodation](#)

Border

Lead agency: Customs New Zealand

- Customs New Zealand, Immigration New Zealand and the Ministry for Primary Industries.

Building and construction

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chain.
- Any entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elements.
- Any entity with statutory responsibilities or that is involved in building and resource consenting necessary for the above purposes.

[Updated information from the Construction sector can be found on the Building Performance website – this includes a comprehensive list of FAQs](#)

Courts, tribunals and the justice system

Lead agency: Ministry of Justice

- Courts of New Zealand, tribunals.
- Critical Crown entities, for example, the Electoral Commission.

Protocols setting out the arrangements for each court, including arrangements made for remote appearances and the circumstances in which people may need to appear in person are in operation.

[Court protocols for COVID-19](#)

Education

Lead agency: Ministry of Education

At Alert Level 4:

- Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning, such as printers, devices, IT.

At Alert Level 3 only:

- Any person employed or contracted as teaching, nursery and childcare staff, including specialist education professionals and others who provide support, for example to disabled children.
- Any person employed by or contracted to an educational facility.
- Any entity supplying educational facilities or educational materials like printers.

Fast-moving consumer goods

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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.

[See Essential services for more information about food](#)

Financial services

Lead agencies: Financial Markets Authority and Reserve Bank of New Zealand

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including

banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.

[Guidance on essential financial services is available on the Reserve Bank website](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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 like rest homes.
- Emergency dental and optometry care services.
- Any entity providing ambulance services.
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku, for example funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries.
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[Guidance on essential services in the health and disability system is available on the Ministry of Health website](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- Courts of New Zealand.
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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 or 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, for example samples, collections and storage facilities that are important to New Zealand.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, in the following categories:
 - Where the service is the only way for people to access food and other goods they need to live day-to-day.
 - A social service that provides and supports a place for someone to live.
 - A social service that supports disabled people to maintain critical wellbeing.
 - Crisis support for people who are unsafe.

[List of social sector organisations providing essential services on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers.
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes, such as vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services.
- 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 that 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, for example 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).

- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs, such as home heating or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

[The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector on their website](#)

This may be updated as the response evolves.

[Advice from Customs New Zealand on essential and non-essential goods is available on their website](#)

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater, for example sanitation, waste, rubbish collection and recycling, liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities.
- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs, such as home heating or fulfilling existing orders, is an essential service.
- Disposal of waste, including recycling, is an essential service and may continue to operate during Alert Level 4. Individual operators have responsibilities to appropriately meet the health, safety, and security requirements of their staff and customers, and should not operate if they feel they cannot do so.
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 - Implement a safety plan as set out on the WorkSafe website.
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- Security and cleaning of GLAM institutions: All galleries, libraries, archives and museums will remain closed to the public. Essential security and maintenance are permitted.
- Security is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- Internet service providers.
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains.
- Any entity supplying services to essential workplaces that are required for the safe operation of that workplace, such as cleaning, security services.
- Commercial cleaners that clean common areas of apartment buildings may also continue to operate, where there is high-traffic like lifts, stairwells.

[Further guidance is available on the Ministry for Culture and Heritage website](#)

Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

Additional decisions made about essential services

[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

[The conditions that businesses must comply with, and details on how to register your business](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Document title: Essential businesses

Version: 324 (block version 27)

Hero statement: Guidance on how to operate your business, and a list of businesses by sector that are essential.

Content type: Content blocks

Essential businesses during Alert Level 4

Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all physical interactions with others outside of your household.

Orders under section 70(1) of the Health Act 1956 define the term "essential businesses" as businesses that are essential to the provision of life and those businesses that support them as described on this website. This section describes what are essential businesses for the purpose of the Health Orders made under Section 70(1) of the Health Act 1956 in relation to COVID-19.

Information for business owners and employees

If you're unsure whether your business provides essential services, you should close. We need as many businesses as possible to close to slow the spread of the virus.

If your business is considered essential, you must operate in a way that minimises the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Businesses should:

- minimise, or eliminate if possible, physical interactions among staff and with and between customers
- 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 far as possible
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction between staff such as through physical distancing, split shifts, staggered meal breaks and flexible working arrangements
- limiting, or eliminating if possible, physical interaction with and between customers, for example 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 sanitisers
- frequent cleaning of premises, especially counters and EFTPOS terminals, and other high-touch surfaces
- protective equipment for staff as appropriate.

If you are unsure if you can operate in a manner that minimises the risk of transmission of COVID-19, you should close while you put in place appropriate measures.

[Employment guidance for businesses and workers](#)

[Health and safety guidance work essential workplaces](#)

What should non-essential businesses do?

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 slow the spread of COVID-19.

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

Businesses by sector that are essential

The list below provides a sector-level overview of the types of business and functions that can remain open during Alert Level 4. This includes any critical suppliers in their supply chains, such as a firm repairing IT and data infrastructure for an essential service can remain in operation.

If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can call [0800 22 66 57](tel:0800226657) or email essential@mbie.govt.nz for advice regarding your specific business.

For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email info@mpi.govt.nz or call [0800 00 83 33](tel:0800008333).

This contents of this page will evolve over time.

The page was last updated at 4pm, 8 April 2020.

Alert Level 4 means New Zealanders not working in essential services must stay at home and stop all physical interactions with others outside of your household.

[Essential services lists the additional decisions made about essential services during Alert Level 4](#)

Accommodation

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity that provides accommodation services for essential workers, isolation/quarantine, and emergency housing.
- Retirement villages.
- Backpackers accommodation.

[See Essential services for more information about backpackers accommodation](#)

Border

Lead agency: Customs New Zealand

- Customs New Zealand, Immigration New Zealand and the Ministry for Primary Industries.

Building and construction

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- Any entity involved in building and construction related to essential services and critical infrastructure, including those in the supply and support chain.
- Any entity involved in any work required to address immediate health or life safety risks, or to prevent serious environmental harm, and relevant essential supply chain elements.
- Any entity with statutory responsibilities or that is involved in building and resource consenting necessary for the above purposes.

[Updated information from the Construction sector can be found on the Building Performance website – this includes a comprehensive list of FAQs](#)

Courts, tribunals and the justice system

Lead agency: Ministry of Justice

- Courts of New Zealand, tribunals.
- Critical Crown entities, for example, the Electoral Commission.

Protocols setting out the arrangements for each court, including arrangements made for remote appearances and the circumstances in which people may need to appear in person are in operation.

[Court protocols for COVID-19](#)

Education

Lead agency: Ministry of Education

At Alert Level 4:

- Any entity or individual determined by the Secretary for Education as required to provide distance or online learning, such as printers, devices, IT.

At Alert Level 3 only:

- Any person employed or contracted as teaching, nursery and childcare staff, including specialist education professionals and others who provide support, for example to disabled children.
- Any person employed by or contracted to an educational facility.
- Any entity supplying educational facilities or educational materials like printers.

Fast-moving consumer goods

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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.

[See Essential services for more information about food](#)

Financial services

Lead agencies: Financial Markets Authority and Reserve Bank of New Zealand

- Any entity that operates consumer and business financial services, financial services infrastructure including

banking services, a stock exchange, broking services, payment and settlement systems, funds management including KiwiSaver, insurance services, financial advice, and support services such as administrators, supervisors and custodians.

[Guidance on essential financial services is available on the Reserve Bank website](#)

Health

Lead agency: Ministry of Health

- 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 like rest homes.
- Emergency dental and optometry care services.
- Any entity providing ambulance services.
- Any entity involved with the deceased/tūpāpaku, for example funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries.
- Any entity producing health sector equipment, medicines and PPE.

[Guidance on essential services in the health and disability system is available on the Ministry of Health website](#)

Local and national government

Lead agencies: Department of Internal Affairs (local government) and State Services Commission (national government)

- 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.

Foreign government

Lead agency: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

- Maintaining critical operations at foreign missions based in New Zealand.

Primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing

Lead agency: Ministry for Primary Industries

- 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).

Public safety and national security

Lead agency: National Emergency Management Agency

- 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, and Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- Courts of New Zealand.
- Any person employed or contracted in a public safety or national security role.

Science

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

- 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 or 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, for example samples, collections and storage facilities that are important to New Zealand.

Social services

Lead Agency: Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki

- Those entities, including non-government organisations, that provide welfare and social services to meet immediate needs, in the following categories:
 - Where the service is the only way for people to access food and other goods they need to live day-to-day.
 - A social service that provides and supports a place for someone to live.
 - A social service that supports disabled people to maintain critical wellbeing.
 - Crisis support for people who are unsafe.

[List of social sector organisations providing essential services on the Ministry of Social Development website](#)

Transport and logistics

Lead agency: Ministry of Transport

- Any small passenger service vehicle driver (who holds the relevant licence) such as ride-share or taxi drivers.
- Any entity providing services to keep vehicles operational for essential work purposes, such as vehicle testing, mechanics, tyre services.
- 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 that 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, for example 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).

- The delivery of solid fuels (including firewood, pellets and coal) for immediate needs, such as home heating or fulfilling existing orders is an essential service.

[The Ministry of Transport has provided specific advice for the transport sector on their website](#)

This may be updated as the response evolves.

[Advice from Customs New Zealand on essential and non-essential goods is available on their website](#)

Utilities and communications, including supply chains

Lead agency: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Ministry for Culture and Heritage (for broadcasting)

- Any entity involved in the production, supply, sale distribution or disposal of electricity, gas, water, wastewater, for example sanitation, waste, rubbish collection and recycling, liquid and solid fuel, telecommunication services, and any entity that is contracted by these entities.
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- Security is considered an essential service, even if security services are being provided in relation to a premise for a non-essential service.
- Internet service providers.
- Any entity that provides maintenance and repair services for utilities and communications, including supply chains.
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Alternative ways of working must be put in place

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.

Additional decisions made about essential services

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Essential non-food consumer products

Businesses are able to sell essential non-food consumer products, provided they do so in a way that protects the public and minimises the risk of COVID-19 spreading.

[The conditions that businesses must comply with, and details on how to register your business](#)

Released under the Official Information Act 1982