



4 November 2021



Ref: OIA-2021/22-0409

Dear 

Official Information Act request relating to when face mask requirements be repealed

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 8 October 2021. You requested:

When will the requirement to wear masks at indoor venues and planes be repealed and what, if any goals or targets have been set for this repeal?

On 22 October 2021, the Government announced the COVID-19 Protection Framework. This framework lays out domestic response measures for a vaccinated population, without a reliance on lockdowns. The new flexible 3-level approach marks a step-change in the COVID-19 response to manage COVID-19 safely in the community.

Under all levels of the framework, face coverings will remain mandatory on flights, and will be mandatory in public venues at Orange and Red. While they will not be mandatory for indoor spaces at Green, the use of face coverings is still encouraged at this level.

The COVID-19 Protection Framework will take effect once 90% of eligible New Zealanders are fully vaccinated and protected against the virus. You can read more about the Protection Framework on the Unite against COVID-19 website (covid19.govt.nz/alert-levels-and-updates/covid-19-protection)

While the COVID-19 Protection Framework does make some minor changes to when face coverings are required for use in indoor venues, there has been no work undertaken in relation to repealing the requirements around face coverings on flights or in indoor venues. Accordingly, I am refusing your request under section 18(e) of the Act, as the information requested does not exist.

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

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



Cheryl Barnes
Deputy Chief Executive, COVID-19 Response