



### **Welcome to Level 3 (as Amended)**

Do you have questions about the new roadmap? Relax, you appear not to be alone in this. Below we try to set out what this all means.

#### **Step 1**

From 11:59pm, Tuesday 5 October, Auckland will remain in Alert Level 3 but several key changes will occur.

- People will be able to connect with others, outdoors, with no more than two households at a time, up to a maximum of 10 people.
- We must continue to wear a face covering at certain places, and to keep 2 metres away from people who are not in our bubble.
- Scan in to keep track of where you go.
- Early childhood education will return for all.
- People can move around Auckland for recreation, but gyms and indoor recreation facilities remain closed.
- The air and road boundaries between Auckland and the rest of the New Zealand, including the Waikato restrictions, remain in place.
- There are no changes to the reasons for personal and business travel.
- Schools can reopen from 18 October 2021, depending on public health advice. A decision will be made a week earlier.
- Moving to each step will depend on public health advice.

#### **Step 2**

- Retailers will be able to open their doors, with the usual measures of wearing facemasks and keeping up physical distancing.
- Public facilities such as pools and zoos will open.
- The number of people who can meet outdoors will increase to 25.

#### **Step 3**

Step 3 will bring back higher risk settings, bringing us closer to the level 2 restrictions we have had in the past.

- Hospitality venues can re-open for seated, separated patrons and with a limit of 50.
- Close contact businesses like hairdressers will also open with mask use and physical distancing.
- Gatherings will also extend to 50 people.

Cabinet will review each step weekly to ensure it's safe to move before confirming the next step. The wage subsidy will continue to be available.

In total, this phasing amounts to a transition plan for Auckland. At the end of these steps, we expect we will then move to a national framework that reflects a more highly vaccinated population, allowing for the ability to deal with riskier settings such as large-scale events with the use of vaccine certificates.

The rest of New Zealand will remain at Alert Level 2 at this stage but the 100-limit cap on hospitality venues is removed. The requirement for customers to be seated and separated with physical distancing remains in place.

It appears that the strategy announced yesterday sees less emphasis on total elimination of the virus, but rather co-existence with it, relying on a highly vaccinated population instead.

### **Vaccine Certificates**

Presently, anyone requiring proof of their vaccination for travel purposes may obtain a letter from the Ministry of Health, but a more widespread usage of a means to prove that the vaccinations have been administered will soon be a reality.

The PM has made some initial announcements around the introduction of a vaccine certificate. Seemingly, more details will be made available in coming days and weeks but it appears that a certification website is presently undergoing beta testing and the intention is that such certificates, in either a hard-copy, or electronic format will be ready for use in November.

What has been said thus far is that people will not be required to display such a certificate to access essential services like healthcare and supermarkets, but it is likely that access to high-risk settings such as hospitality venues and large gatherings will be restricted to those who can prove they have been vaccinated.

We understand that the pilot website currently requires people to have an “identity document” like a licence or passport to sign up – although it also appears to allow RealMe logins, which the Government separately authenticates. Obtaining a RealMe login is a simple process that does not cost anything find out more [HERE](#).

We expect, that as more information in this regard unfolds, there will be greater clarity on what businesses and employers will be able to restrict access to their premises to those who cannot produce a vaccine certificate.

### **Resurgence Support Payment (RSP) Round 3**

Applications for a third round of the RSP open on 8 October 2021. Businesses and organisations can apply for the third payment even if they have received the first and second payments. The payment and eligibility criteria are the same as the current scheme.

The COVID-19 RSP helps to cover wages and fixed costs for businesses who have been directly affected when there is an increase to alert level 2 or higher for a week or more.

Applications for all payments will stay open until 1 month after the whole of New Zealand returns to alert level 1.

To be eligible, your business must have experienced at least a 30% drop in revenue or a 30% decline in capital-raising ability over a 7-day period due to an increase in alert levels.

You can receive \$1,500 per business plus \$400 per full time employee (FTE), up to 50 FTE. The maximum payment is \$21,500. A sole trader can receive a payment of up to \$1,900.

Businesses anywhere in New Zealand can apply if they meet the eligibility criteria.

You can apply for both the RSP and the COVID-19 wage subsidy scheme if you meet all the eligibility criteria.

### **COVID-19 Wage Subsidy Scheme**

A fourth round of the August 2021 wage subsidy scheme has been approved and applications are now open. The payment rates and eligibility criteria remain the same.

Applications for the fourth August 2021 wage subsidy will close at 11.59 pm on Thursday, 14 October 2021.

You can apply for the COVID-19 wage subsidy scheme to help keep paying your staff and protect jobs. Businesses must meet the eligibility criteria to apply. Businesses and self-employed people must expect a 40% drop in revenue to receive the wage subsidy. The wage subsidy is paid in a 2-week lump sum. You can get:

- \$600 per week for each full-time employee; and
- \$359 per week for each part-time employee.

You **cannot** get the wage subsidy August 2021, leave support scheme and short-term absence payment for the same employee at the same time.

Applications for the third August 2021 wage subsidy have now closed. Work and Income will contact you once your application has been processed to let you know the outcome.

We understand that there have been system issues which may have delayed the processing of some applications, but that payments are now being made. If you have made an application that has not yet resulted in a payment, we recommend that you follow this up with the authorities.

At Ecovis KGA we have a dedicated team to help you through these times and are well placed to assist in exploring what options are available and other measures to help protect your business.