

ALL NEW ZEALANDERS WELL-HOUSED



Covid-19 Sector Update 23 March 2020

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Welcome to a special newsletter from Community Housing Aotearoa
Nga Wharerau o Aotearoa.

This a very dynamic situation. We will continue to keep you informed as information comes to hand. We are working closely with ministries to ensure they are aware of the issues you are addressing and the supports required to house those in need.

Further economic relief measures as country moves to higher alert level

A rent freeze, further wage subsidies, and support for mortgage holders are among further measures announced by the Government today as New Zealand prepares to shut down non-essential services in efforts to tackle the Covid-19 virus.

The country is moving to alert level 3 and to alert level 4 in 48 hours (midnight Wednesday). Non-essential services are to close, but the Prime Minister emphasised that supermarkets, pharmacies and other essential services will stay open.

Her full speech is [available here](#) and more detail is also [available here](#).

Finance Minister Grant Robertson has announced further measures to provide economic relief, including an extension of the wage subsidies scheme, a freeze on all rent increases, and agreement to look at extending no-cause terminations.

The previous \$150,000 cap on wage subsidies is being lifted.

The scheme covers registered charities, non-governmental organisations, incorporated societies and post-settlement governance entities.

The full detail of Grant Robertson's announcement [is here](#).

He also advised that the Government, the Reserve Bank and retail banks have agreed in principle to significant temporary support for mortgage holders and a business finance guarantee scheme for those affected by Covid-19.

Clarification of 'Essential Services' and Letter to Ministries on Covid-19

Community Housing Aotearoa is working with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development to confirm that Community Housing Providers along with emergency and transitional housing providers are providing 'essential services'. We expect confirmation from HUD in the next 24 hours.

We also submitted a letter to both HUD and MSD on Friday. We urged the ministries to seek bold action to prevent an increase in homelessness by putting a freeze on evictions from rental housing and reducing or suspending mortgage payments for home owners for households impacted by Covid-19. In addition, we raised issues we heard from providers on contract flexibility and support for service provision. You can read the letter [here](#).

Covid-19: Information for community housing providers

Always check the [Ministry of Health website](#) for the latest official information relating to COVID-19.

Further information and resources about Covid-19 relevant to your work as a Community Housing Provider are available under the ['Best Practice' tab on this website](#).

Please contact Community Housing Aotearoa directly if you need additional support as a member - either CHA Senior Programme Manager [David Zussman](#) or Deputy Chief Executive [Chris Glaudel](#).