**8 September 2021**

**Community Housing Aotearoa Alert Level 4 Guidance**

Community Housing Aotearoa (CHA) has put together this document to consolidate information, contacts, resources and advice to help you in your day-to-day service delivery and decision making. It will be updated as new information is available and Alert Levels change.

Please contact Chris Glaudel at [projects@communityhousing.org.nz](mailto:projects@communityhousing.org.nz) or David Zussman at [davidz@communityhousing.org.nz](mailto:davidz@communityhousing.org.nz) if you have any questions or additional resources to suggest. Please remember, we are in this together – you don't have do this on your own.

**Alert Level 4 businesses and services**

Organisations providing emergency, transitional, Housing First and public housing are deemed to be Alert Level 4 businesses and services. As an Alert Level 4 service provider, it is important to always consider the purpose of Level 4 – do no harm, break the chain of transmission. Don't make decisions in isolation – check with the [Ministry of Health (MoH)](https://www.health.govt.nz/) , [Ministry of Social Development (MSD)](https://msd.govt.nz/) , [Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)](https://www.hud.govt.nz/), [WorkSafe NZ](https://www.worksafe.govt.nz/), or ask us here at [Community Housing Aotearoa](https://www.communityhousing.org.nz/).

Under Alert Level 4, some of what you are doing may be business as usual and you will follow your normal processes and procedures for working with your residents. However, there are some guidelines you can follow to keep your staff safe.

* We have been assured that health, mental health and addiction services are still running essential services to support people at Alert Level 4, so reach out to the GP, Healthline, DHB crisis services or usual service providers in your areas, if required.
* Residents who have been using alcohol or drugs for a long period of time may have difficulty stopping use and experience withdrawal symptoms or experience distress if unable to access substances. The New Zealand Drug foundation has provided information regarding [managing withdrawal and how to respond.](https://thelevel.org.nz/making-changes/wanting-to-make-changes/#managing-withdrawal)
* Some residents may not be able to self-isolate due to issues with addiction or mental health and insist on leaving their home. In these situations, it is likely to be safer to let them do this than try to prevent them leaving.
* Some residents may experience distress due to withdrawal from tobacco. They may benefit from nicotine replacement therapies provided through primary health services.
* Make sure your residents understand how to keep themselves safe by preventing the spread – in public, wearing a mask, keeping a 2-metre distance from others, washing hands, and sneezing into a tissue or elbow.
* Watch out for symptoms of COVID-19 and if unwell call Healthline or GP to get tested.

**Operating under Alert Level 4**

To assist you with making informed decisions, here are some questions to consider and resources to help you operate safely. The Delta COVID-19 strain spreads between people by aerosol and droplet transmission and is more likely to transmit between people in an indoor environment. Physical distancing will not be enough to stop the spread of COVID-19. Therefore, it is critical to wear a facemask or appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) in an indoor environment, such as a workplace or public setting. Vaccination is another crucial way to reduce people's risk of hospitalisation and severe complications or worse. Check the MOH website for the updated [locations of interest](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-public/contact-tracing-covid-19/covid-19-contact-tracing-locations-interest) list.

If you, staff, or residents have been at a place of interest at the same date and time listed, isolate from others if possible, and either record the contact on the MOH website link or call Healthline, and get tested. Public Health staff will advise on what to do from there.

**The following are questions that your organisation should consider when planning your response**:

*Q1. Who are the staff in your organisation at higher risk of complications from COVID-19 or staff who live with people at higher risk of complications from COVID-19?*

Remember, the focus here is – do no harm, break the chain of transmission. Keeping staff with a risk of complications safe will reduce the need for people to be hospitalised and the risk of severe complications or worse. Doing so protects staff and protects the health professionals who may be needed to provide care for them. As part of your business continuity plan, staff roles may need a risk assessment to determine the likelihood of exposure to COVID-19 and the potential consequences of exposure to COVID-19. Where risk is identified a safety plan needs to be put in place and discussed with staff. The COVID-19 website provides a list of [relevant conditions](https://covid19.govt.nz/individuals-and-households/health-and-wellbeing/vulnerable-people/) that can make COVID-19 a severe illness placing persons at increased risk. Encourage all staff to get vaccinated, if possible.

*Q2. Staff who are at a higher risk of complications due to COVID-19 should stay at home. Consider whether these staff can work from home and provide telephone-based or technology-based support, advice, admin, coordination, and/or management roles?*

Encourage staff to be vaccinated, if possible.

*Q3. Can all essential service staff work from home and provide telephone-based or technology-based support, advisory, administration, coordination, and/or management roles?*

The purpose of Level 4 is to eliminate COVID-19. Staying at home and wearing masks and making the physical gaps between people wide enough that transmission cannot occur, including people working in essential services, helps to break the chain.

*Q4. What is your prioritisation and decision-making process to protect as many staff and people within the service from being exposed as possible?*

*Q5. If face-to-face work is required, what is your decision-making process for one-off contact situations and service wide delivery?*

It is important to ensure staff are clear on your organisation's protocols for PPE, mask wearing, encourage vaccination, hand hygiene, physical distancing, cough etiquette and usual cleaning in the work environment, and follow up with staff to ensure these are followed. The Chief Executive or senior managers should make these health and safety and business continuity decisions. Check if a Health Order is in place regarding vaccinations, as these may change.

*Q6. If face-to-face work is required, can your organisation split staff into smaller teams?*

Organising staff into smaller teams who do not have contact with each other can ensure continuity of service. If a member of one team develops symptoms or is exposed to COVID-19 and needs to self-isolate, the other team can continue to provide service. Your organisation should consider in advance how you will operate when a staff member becomes sick so there is a plan B.

*Q7. Are there other organisations that can provide cover for sick staff and help maintain essential services, if needed? Who are your natural partners or larger service providers that may temporarily be able to cover essential service roles for 14 days?*

While organising staff into isolated teams is helpful, that is not possible for all organisations, especially those with limited staff. Identifying in advance who may be able to step in as a Plan B for smaller organisations or Plan C for larger ones can ensure service continuity.

*Q8. What are your prioritisation and decision-making processes that help ensure all services provided by staff are essential?*

Identifying other support channels available for people within your service can help to minimise opportunities for transmission. Family members or the local welfare teams within the local council may also be available to assist. Make sure information on these resources is available to service users and provide telephone or other means to help them develop a plan of support not dependent on your staff.

*Q10. Do you know the official contact within HUD, MSD, DHB, Whanau Ora funding agency, or other agency you are providing contracted services for who can assist your organisation with strategic and operational matters while we are at Alert Level 4?*

Remember you are not in this alone and others facing similar issues will be bringing their questions to their ministry contacts. They can provide you with resources and ideas. They may provide guidance on how you can use contracted providers with the correct authorisation, protocols and procedures in place to do the work instead. This could be such activities as urgent building repairs, the repair or delivery of new whiteware, on-site security services etc. If unsure, please contact CHA.

**COVID-19 key contact numbers, helplines, and web-based resources**

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| **Welfare** |  |
| Police Emergency | 111 |
| Police Non-emergency  (COVID-19 welfare checks) | 105  [105.police.govt.nz](https://www.police.govt.nz/105support) |
| Government Helpline  8:00AM – 1:00AM, seven days a week | 0800 779 997 |
| Ministry of Housing and Urban Development | [Level 4 Guidance](https://www.hud.govt.nz/assets/Community-and-Public-Housing/COVID-19-Essential-services/COVID-19-Provider-Alert-Level-4.pdf)  [FAQ's](https://www.hud.govt.nz/assets/Community-and-Public-Housing/COVID-19-Essential-services/Frequently-Asked-Questions-for-housing-and-related-service-providers-Alert-Level-4.pdf) |
| Ministry of Social Development | [COVID-19: Welfare and social sector support for family, whānau, and āiga carers - Ministry of Social Development (msd.govt.nz)](https://www.msd.govt.nz/what-we-can-do/community/carers/covid-19.html) |
| Online tool to check what welfare assistance may be available from MSD | <https://check.msd.govt.nz/> |
| People who need financial help to **buy food** may be able to get help through **Work and Income**. You do not need to be on a benefit to get help. | [Food Secure Communities - Ministry of Social Development (msd.govt.nz)](https://www.msd.govt.nz/what-we-can-do/community/food-secure-communities/index.html)  [Food - Work and Income](https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/eligibility/urgent-costs/food.html) Call [0800 559 009](tel:0800559009) |
| **Food banks** will continue to operate at Alert Level 4. If people have an urgent need for food within the next 24 to 48 hours, your local food bank may be able to help you. | [Find food banks and other food assistance services across New Zealand](https://www.familyservices.govt.nz/directory/searchresultspublic.htm?pageNumber=1&searchRegion=-1&cat1=68&expandCategories=false&searchTerms=Food&searchByProviderName=false&cat2=110&pageSize=10&searchCriterion.sortOrder=RELEVANCE). |
| Food, shopping and access to essential supplies. | <https://covid19.govt.nz/alert-levels-and-updates/alert-level-4/#food-and-shopping>  <https://covid19.govt.nz/activities/shopping-and-services/#if-you-need-help-getting-essential-supplies> |
| Student Volunteer Army are offering an essentials delivery service also for those who cannot obtain transport. | <https://shop.sva.org.nz> |
| Immigration | 0508 225 288 |
| Contact your local Civil Defence Emergency Management group [here](https://www.civildefence.govt.nz/find-your-civil-defence-group/) | |
| wecare.kiwi <https://wecare.kiwi/> (Care NZ and IHC) free service to sustain family/whānau carers and people living on their own, of any age. | Business hours [0800 777 797](tel:0800%20777%20797), [help@wecare.kiwi](mailto:help@wecare.kiwi) or email [centre@carers.net.nz](mailto:centre@carers.net.nz)  Carers NZ's helpline during business hours. Will respond within 24 hours. |
| **Health** |  |
| **Emergency** risk to life / severe injury, breathing difficulties   * let them know if symptoms of cough, fever, shortness of breath, * and/or suspected COVID-19. | 111 |
| **General Practice (GP)** | Usual number |
| **Healthline: dedicated COVID-19 number**  (24-hour service, seven days a week)   * if does not have a GP, * symptoms of feeling unwell, cough, fever, and shortness of breath, and suspected COVID-19. | 0800 358 5453  If possible, have the person who is unwell make the call or be available to speak to the health professionals and to be assessed over the phone. |
| **Healthline: General symptoms**  (24-hours, seven days a week)   * unwell not suspected COVID-19. | 0800 611 116  If possible, as above |
| **Mental health concerns** |  |
| **Emergency** risk to life or immediate harm | 111 |
| **Crisis** support required   * check weblink for information about your District Health Board local area 0800 number OR * Call Healthline 24-hour service, seven days a week). | Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team number <https://mentalhealth.org.nz/get-help/in-crisis/>  Or the Ministry of Health Healthline 0800 611 116 |
| Mental health support by phone or text   * if does not have a usual support provider. | Call or text 1737  <https://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/get-help/in-crisis/helplines/> |
| **Promoting wellbeing** | |
| Sign up to the Mental Health and Addictions newsletter, which is one of the key channels used to provide frequent updates: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/mental-health-and-addiction/updates-mental-health-and-addiction-directorate#subscribe>  The Ministry of Health website contains information on mental [health and wellbeing resources](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-health-advice-general-public/covid-19-wellbeing-alert-level-4)  Ministry of Health has set up an inbox to receive information about both continuity of mental health and addiction services and about psychosocial needs. This address can also be used to ask questions about national advice or guidance and how it relates to mental health and addiction services. Email [COVID-19Psychosocial@health.govt.nz](mailto:COVID-19Psychosocial@health.govt.nz)  The Mental Health Foundation website also has [tips on mental health](https://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/get-help/covid-19/top-tips-to-get-through/) and wellbeing.  Melon Health has developed materials for [Self-care and support for New Zealanders during Covid19](https://www.melonhealth.com/mental-wellbeing/) | |
| **Youth and rangitahi** |  |
| **Emergency -** risk to life or immediate harm | 111 |
| Oranga Tamariki  **Links** to practice during Alert Level 4 | <https://practice.orangatamariki.govt.nz/covid-19-implications-for-our-practice/> |
| **Alcohol and drugs** |  |
| **Emergency** severe symptom of withdrawal | 111 |
| Recognising symptoms of withdrawal   * severe * uncommon * common | [Drugs in lockdown (thelevel.org.nz)](https://thelevel.org.nz/covid-19/)[Wanting to make changes? - The Level](https://thelevel.org.nz/making-changes/wanting-to-make-changes/#managing-withdrawal) |
| Non-emergency support required,   * Call usual support provider | Usual number |
| If no current support provider, connect via link to list of your local alcohol and other drug service to find out what support they provide. | <https://www.healthpoint.co.nz/> |
| **Helpline** (24 hrs a day, seven days a week)   * Counsellors and peer support * Call free from mobile or landline * Text free and they will text you back   Live chat on their website | 0800 787 797  Text 8681  <https://alcoholdrughelp.org.nz/> |
| **On-line resource** Harm minimisation during lockdown | <https://drughelp.org.nz/covid-19-lockdown-support/managing-withdrawal> |
| **On-line resource** Supporting others | <https://drughelp.org.nz/covid-19-lockdown-support/supporting-others> |
| **Family violence/ sexual harm** |  |
| **Emergency**  Risk to life or immediate harm | 111 |
| **Women's Refuge**  be linked up with an advocate in your area | [0800 743 843](tel:0800743843) (0800 REFUGE) |
| **Helpline** Safe to Talk Kōrero mai, ka ora – sexual harm helpline. Talk to counsellors | Call [0800 044334](tel:0800044334) Text [4334](tel:4334) or email [support@safetotalk.nz](mailto:support@safetotalk.nz?subject=Support) |
| **Helpline** Family Services 211  – for help finding, and direct transfer to, community-based health and social support services in your area | ([0800 211 211](tel:0800211211)) |
| **Victim Support** | [Call 0800 842 846 to get help](https://victimsupport.org.nz/get-help/your-help-lines/) |
| **Online resources** that links to assistance available | <https://covid19.govt.nz/help-and-advice/for-everyone/family-violence-and-sexual-violence-prevention/> |

**Workplace Health and Safety Alert Level 4**

Advice is based on Ministry of Health and New Zealand Government information and factsheets relevant for community housing providers and homelessness services.

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| **Workplace health and safety: preventing the spread of the virus** |
| Going to work Staff **cannot**go to work if they:   * have cold or flu symptoms (one or more, cough, fever 38+, headache, sore throat, aches, fatigue, runny nose, temporary loss of smell). Staff with symptoms should call Healthline or their GP and get tested for COVID-19. If the COVID-19 test is negative, staff can return to work, after they have been symptom free for 24 hours. * have been in close contact with someone confirmed with COVID-19 in the past 14 days or at a [location of interest](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-public/contact-tracing-covid-19/covid-19-contact-tracing-locations-interest) at the same date and time as listed on the MOH places of interest list. We advise that you follow [MOH guidance](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-public/contact-tracing-covid-19/covid-19-contact-tracing-locations-interest) as directed and self-isolate for 14 days from the date of   close contact, record contact via the MOH website [link](https://tracing.covid19.govt.nz/loi)  or call Healthline, and get tested for COVID-19.   * are a secondary household contact of a close contact of a person confirmed to have COVID-19 in the past 14 days or be at a [location of interest](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-public/contact-tracing-covid-19/covid-19-contact-tracing-locations-interest) at the same date and time as listed on the MOH places of interest list. Household members should stay at home until the Primary Close Contact returns a negative test result from their day 5 test. If this person becomes symptomatic after day 5, you need to stay at home or in your accommodation until they return another negative test result. * are considered to be a casual plus contact (people who have been in the same place at the same time as someone infectious with COVID-19 but have not had enough exposure to be a close contact). [Stay at home](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-public/covid-19-staying-home), get a test immediately and then again around Day 5 after last exposure and remain at home until a negative day 5 test result is received. If person who is a casual plus contact has had a negative day 5 test they should self-monitor for [COVID-19 symptoms](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-public/about-covid-19) for 14 days. If COVID-19 symptoms develop after day 5, staff should get tested immediately and stay at home until negative test result is received. Employers should discuss a safety plan with a causal plus contact before they return to work and ensure it is safe for them to do so. * If you develop symptoms (listed below) within 14 days of contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19, you should phone Healthline on [0800 358 5453](tel:08003585453). |
| **Preventing the spread of the virus** |
| * Wear a facemask and keep at least 2 metres away from those not in your bubble, in an indoor or public environment. * wash your hands with soap and water and dry them well, before and after eating and after going to the toilet. * avoid contact with others (touching, kissing, hugging and other intimate contact). * cover coughs and sneezes with clean tissues or your elbow and dispose of tissues. * use alcohol-based hand sanitiser if you can't wash and dry your hands.   **Links** to [posters and videos](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-essential-workers/personal-protective-equipment-use-non-health-essential-workers) on hand hygiene for workplaces on the Covid-19 website. |
| **Mask wearing and physical distancing** |
| Because transmission is by aerosol and droplet, it is important to wear a mask in all indoor/ workplace, residential and public environments, when close to others. In addition to wearing a mask, record your visit using QR codes, manual entry to app, or in log, maintain a two metre (2m) distance between every person you are in contact with, and ensure they are doing the same with everyone they are in contact with.  [COVID-19: Use of masks and face coverings in the community | Ministry of Health NZ](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-public/covid-19-use-masks-and-face-coverings-community)  [Wear a face covering | Unite against COVID-19 (covid19.govt.nz)](https://covid19.govt.nz/health-and-wellbeing/protect-yourself-and-others-from-covid-19/wear-a-face-covering/) |
| **Good cough etiquette** |
| The person with the symptoms should practice good cough etiquette, such as coughing into a tissue or their elbow, and wear a mask. Dispose of tissues immediately. |
| **Hand hygiene** |
| Hand hygiene is important and an effective ways to prevent the spread of illness. Washing your hands with soap and water is as effective as using hand sanitiser. Hands must be washed well for at least 20 seconds – including front and back of hands, between fingers, thumbs and up to the wrist.  There are good instructional videos on hand washing here ([Hand washing with soap](https://vimeo.com/398694998), [Hand washing with sanitiser](https://vimeo.com/398694946)). We recommend you put posters up in your bathrooms to encourage hand washing. There are some excellent [posters and resources here](https://covid19.govt.nz/how-were-uniting/wash-your-hands/). |
| **Guidance for cleaning** |
| The Ministry of Health website has [excellent cleaning advice](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-information-specific-audiences/general-cleaning-information-covid-19) for infection control within your facility.   * Wash dishes in the dishwasher if you can. * Clean all ''surfaces such as kitchen benchtops, bathrooms, and toilets as usual with antiseptic wipes or disinfectant. * Clean toilets with a separate set of cleaning equipment (disposable cleaning cloths, mops, etc). * Clean floors with disinfectant as usual. * Wash laundry in warm or hot water and dry thoroughly. Wear gloves while handling soiled laundry. |

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

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| **What is PPE?** |
| PPE means personal protective equipment. It most commonly means gloves apron and a mask for some tasks relating to close personal care. For someone suspected to have COVID-19 or confirmed to have COVID-19 it means an N95 mask. |
| **Do you need PPE?** |
| If providing personal close care is not part of your usual service delivery, there is not an expectation for your service to deliver personal close care during the COVID-19 response.   * Staff, like everyone else are asked to wear a facemask and keep a 2-metre distance from the people they usually support. * Most social service staff will not require full PPE, (mask, gloves, gown and goggles or a visor) in the course of their usual work. * Full PPE (mask, gloves, gown and goggles or a visor) is only recommended for staff who are working with someone suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19. * Most face-to-face support for people who are not suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 can be provided safely by wearing a mask and keeping a 2-metre distance. For example, contactless delivery putting food by someone's door and moving away from the door before they open the door, checking on someone's welfare by phone.   Basic hygiene measures for everyone include wearing a mask indoors or when close to those not in your bubble, physical distancing, good hand hygiene, cough etiquette, usual cleaning of surfaces and frequently touched items, avoid touching face, eyes, mouth, and nose. This helps prevent the spread of many infectious illnesses. |
| **If you need PPE** |
| Face masks are now mandatory in all indoor workplace settings.  [COVID-19: Personal Protective Equipment Central Supply | Ministry of Health NZ](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-central-supply)  To assess whether you need full PPE or not and what type of PPE you will need (non-health workers). See updated MOH and Worksafe guidance.  [Personal protective equipment use for non-health workers | Ministry of Health NZ](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-central-supply/personal-protective-equipment-use-non-health-workers)[Personal protective equipment – a guide for businesses | WorkSafe](https://www.worksafe.govt.nz/topic-and-industry/personal-protective-equipment-ppe/personal-protective-equipment-a-guide-for-businesses/) |
| **General PPE for cleaning and food handling** |
| Always wear disposable gloves when cleaning. Dispose of used gloves in a rubbish bin. Wash your hands immediately after handling these items.  You can use hand sanitiser (containing at least 60 percent alcohol) if soap and water are not available and if your hands are not visibly dirty. If using hand sanitiser, cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.  Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. |

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| **Shared accommodation** |
| The Ministry of Health has information about [self-isolating](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-public/covid-19-self-isolation-managed-isolation-quarantine) including isolating with other people in the same property, or in shared accommodation, as well as [cleaning guidelines](https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-general-cleaning-and-disinfection-advice/cleaning-following-confirmed-or-probable-case-covid-19). |
| Engage your local Public Health Unit |
| Work with them to develop a plan for what to do if a COVID-19 case is suspected or confirmed in or around your facility. |
| **Prepare your community** |
| * Develop [safety plans](file:///C:\Users\amand\Downloads\WKS-17-Covid-19-Safety-Plan-v3-0.pdf)  for what to do if staff or volunteers are unable to come to work due to self-isolation or illness.  [Your COVID-19 safety plan – what you need to think about | WorkSafe](https://www.worksafe.govt.nz/about-us/news-and-media/your-covid-19-safety-plan-what-you-need-to-think-about/) * Develop a plan for communicating with staff, volunteers and attendees whenever updates are needed. * If possible, identify space where those who become unwell can be separated from others temporarily. Designate a room and bathroom (if available) and develop a plan for cleaning the room safely. Public health unit staff may guide you further about your individual situation. Ensure surfaces that are frequently touched – such as shared desks, countertops, kitchen areas, equipment, electronics and doorknobs – are cleaned as usual with disinfectant. * Ensure there are appropriate handwashing facilities, tissues and lined containers for the safe disposal of used masks and tissues available. * Place tips and advice about COVID-19 in obvious and visible places, including health tips and where to go for help and advice. * Ensure staff, volunteers and those using the space are aware of these health steps, and of the importance of following them. |
| **Reducing risk of spread** |
| How can you reduce the risk of spread of illness in a communal housing situation? How can you support people to keep within their household bubbles? |
| * Keep communal spaces well ventilated. * Ask people to wear a face mask and maintain a distance of at least 2 metres in communal areas. * Can you split the use of bathrooms to reduce the risk of spread of illness? For example, if 18 people share a communal house and there are 3 bathrooms and toilets, can the same 6 people/ groups be allocated to each toilet and bathroom? * Avoid people from different rooms needing to get closer than 2 metres apart by making a roster to use communal areas, such as the kitchen during mealtimes or laundry facilities. * Remind people to wear a mask and keep 2 metres apart if you provide an outside smoking area. * Clean high touch surfaces (doorknobs), light switches, toilets and bathrooms as usual. Particularly in accommodation with higher numbers of people where the risk of 'bursting' bubbles is higher. |
| If you have concerns, about someone in your accommodation with symptoms, please encourage them to call or you call Healthline or their GP and get tested for COVID-19 and ask them to self-isolate. |

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| **If someone in the service or staff has symptoms** | |
| **Healthline: dedicated COVID-19 number**  (24-hour service, seven days a week)   * if does not have a GP * symptoms of feeling unwell, cough, fever, headache, and shortness of breath, runny nose, temporary loss of smell. | 0800 358 5453  If possible, have the person who is unwell make the call or be available to speak to the health professionals and to be assessed over the phone. |
| **Public health staff** will contact you to contract trace within the service and provide advice on next steps. | * Isolating person/s with symptoms * quarantine of a building * access to health/ welfare supports for people in isolation. |
| Public health staff should organise contact tracing and advise employers on the next steps in the event of a case of COVID-19 being suspected and/or confirmed in your workplace and/or shared accommodation. | |
| If you are having issues with business continuity due to staff being unwell or being required to self-isolate in the event of a case of COVID-19 being suspected and/or confirmed in your workplace and/or shared accommodation, please let HUD or your usual contract provider and CHA know, and we will work with you to find practical solutions. | |

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| **Transport (essential services)** |
| Organisations can use approved taxi services, Uber etc to transport staff and people to their housing, providing people do not have symptoms of COVID-19 and appropriate safety protocols are followed. |
| Public health staff will organise specific transportation with staff in full PPE for people who are confirmed to have COVID-19 between accommodation and managed isolation or hospital facilities. |

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| **Empty properties and essential moves at Level 4 – key questions and issues that you should take into consideration.** |
| The Ministry of Social Development [issued guidance](http://communityhousing.org.nz/resources/article/pausing-non-essential-placements-in-transitional-and-public-housing) on 1 April 2020 which still applies. |
| At level four MSD will only support essential movements (i.e. where there’s an immediate risk to health, safety or security), and then only where it can be done in compliance with health guidelines. It is only essential to move or place a person or household when:   * they can't safely self-isolate in their current accommodation or they're homeless and they can move to more suitable accommodation to safely self-isolate e.g., moving a family from communal accommodation into a self-contained property, or moving a homeless person off the street into appropriate accommodation * they're in over-crowded housing and they can move to more suitable accommodation to safely self-isolate, e.g., an existing public housing tenant in an over-crowded property. * there's a serious risk to their health, safety and security in their current accommodation and they can move to safer accommodation e.g., people who may be at risk of family violence. |
| Providers should only undertake such a move if:   * They have in place the appropriate policy and procedures to manage the move in a way that complies with the health and safety requirements of Level 4 * They can maintain the safety of staff * Individuals or households can move quickly and without disruption to others. * They can minimise the number of people and organisations (e.g., delivery drivers) involved in the move * They have contacted MSD / MHUD first or as soon as practically possible |
| Providers should also consider:   * The level of maintenance required. This should be kept to a minimum and address minimum health and safety requirements. * If additional maintenance is required hold the unit/property as vacant and notify MSD/HUD * Advise MSD/HUD of vacancies available for occupation * If people don't have the essentials to live safely and independently in a new property (e.g., whiteware, beds, utilities), it is more appropriate for them to be placed in emergency housing instead. * It may be necessary to interact with local police about the essential nature of the move. This will also impact individuals/households. |
| If providers are approached to house anyone who are considered close contacts or casual plus contacts of someone with COVID-19, they should contact MSD/HUD immediately and before proceeding. Separate guidance will be provided. |