



# Cabinet

## Minute of Decision

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### COVID-19 Response: 8 November 2021 Review of Alert Level Settings

#### Portfolio                      COVID-19 Response

On 8 November 2021, Cabinet:

- 1        **noted** that since Tuesday, 17 August 2021, there have been 4,541 community cases of COVID-19 associated with the Auckland August outbreak in New Zealand (as at 9.00 am Monday, 8 November 2021);
- 2        **noted** that on 1 November 2021, Cabinet made the following decisions in relation to Auckland's Alert Level settings:
  - 2.1      agreed to keep Auckland at current Alert Level 3 (stage one of the three-stage reduction) until 11.59 pm, Tuesday, 16 November 2021, subject to the in-principle decision in paragraph 2.2 below;
  - 2.2      agreed in principle that Auckland move to stage two of the three-stage Alert Level 3 reduction at 11.59 pm, Tuesday, 9 November 2021, subject to further public health risk assessment, with Cabinet to confirm whether Auckland will move to stage two at its meeting on 8 November 2021;
  - 2.3      agreed that Cabinet next review the Alert Level settings for all New Zealand on Monday, 15 November 2021;
- 3        **noted** that on 2 November 2021, COVID-19 Ministers with Power to Act decided to move upper Northland (the area north of a line between Hokianga Harbour and Kaeo on the east coast) to Alert Level 3 from 11.59 pm, Tuesday, 2 November 2021, with a review of these settings by Cabinet on 8 November 2021;
- 4        **noted** that the public health risk assessment of community transmission within:
  - 4.1      Auckland is high;
  - 4.2      upper Northland is low;

## Alert Levels

- 5 **noted** the Director-General of Health's interim public health advice is that:
- 5.1 Auckland can move to Alert Level 3 stage two at 11:59 pm Tuesday, 9 November 2021 for a minimum of two weeks, pending no unexpected developments;
  - 5.2 upper Northland should move to Alert Level 2 at 11:59 pm Tuesday, 9 November 2021;
- 6 **noted** the update from the Director-General of Health on the latest case situation in Northland;
- 7 **agreed** that an appropriate measure in response to the level of public health risk would be to:
- 7.1 move Auckland to Alert Level 3 stage two at 11:59 pm, Tuesday, 9 November 2021 for a minimum of two weeks, pending no unexpected developments;
  - 7.2 move upper Northland to Alert Level 2 at 11:59 pm, Thursday, 11 November 2021;
- 8 **invited** the Minister for COVID-19 Response to report back to Cabinet on 15 November 2021 on the path for moving Auckland to Alert Level 3 stage three;
- 9 **agreed** that Cabinet next review the Alert Level settings for Auckland on 22 November 2021;
- 10 **noted** that the Alert Level settings for Northland will be reviewed alongside the rest of New Zealand, excluding Auckland, on 15 November 2021;

## Alert Level 3 settings

- 11 **noted** that there is an opportunity to improve certainty and clarity at stage two of the modified Alert Level 3 settings by confirming at a more granular level which businesses and services can resume operations at stage two;
- 12 **confirmed** that the settings at stage two of reduced Alert Level 3 restrictions, to be applied to any part of New Zealand, include:
- 12.1 permitting some public facilities (libraries, museums and zoos) to operate with mandatory face coverings for staff and customers, record keeping for all people other than workers, and two metre physical distancing requirements;
  - 12.2 prohibiting other public facilities (swimming pools, and sport, recreation and leisure centres) from operating;
  - 12.3 permitting retail businesses to operate with mandatory face coverings for staff and customers and two metre physical distancing requirements;
  - 12.4 retail shopping centres and malls (a subset of retail businesses) will be permitted to resume operations with the public controls outlined in paragraph 13 below applying, but that:
    - 12.4.1 event facilities (e.g. cinemas and theatres) and gyms and exercise facilities within these malls and shopping centres will not be permitted to reopen;

12.4.2 hospitality venues within them will only be permitted to open for takeaway;

12.5 increasing the limit for controlled gatherings to 25 people (plus staff);

12.6 increasing the limit for outdoor gatherings to 25 people for any purpose;

13 **agreed** that swimming pools, sport, recreation and leisure centres, and gyms and exercise facilities, be permitted to re-open at stage three of the reduced Alert Level 3 settings provided they have appropriate public health controls in place, including two metre physical distancing and a maximum of 100 people per defined space;

**Other matters**

14 **agreed** that Cabinet's decision today be communicated by the Prime Minister.

Michael Webster  
Secretary of the Cabinet

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