

GUIDELINES FOR MINISTRY AND WORSHIP

In October 2021 the New Zealand Government Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa introduced the COVID-19 Protection Framework, also known as the 'traffic light system'. This replaces the alert level system that has been in place since early 2020.

In consultation with ministry units, the Diocesan Council formed a diocesan COVID-19 Protection Policy aligned with the government framework. Following government changes on 4 April 2022, however, this policy is no longer in force.

The information in this document now remains the primary guidance for ministry units. This is designed to provide specific advice with regards to the worship and operational life of the ministry unit. It is important to note that these guidelines will be updated in response to changes in Government policy.

It is important that the guidelines in this document be read in the context of both government direction:

[Official Government 'traffic light system'](#) and [Guidelines for Places of Worship](#)

Gathering or Event?

The government framework distinguished between a Gathering and an Event.

- **Gathering** is defined as *'a group of people who are intermingling'*. Services and the majority of church activities are examples of gatherings.
- **Event** is defined as an activity organised by a business or service
 - that takes place at a commercial or private indoor or outdoor premises or a publicly owned premises hired for that purpose;
 - that has controlled access of customers or clients via ticketing, fee paying on premises, registration, or other practicable means of controllable entry;
 - unless that activity is an outdoor community event or a gathering. Ticketed concerts held at places of worship are an example of an event.

Leaders and Limits

Capacity limits do not include clergy, workers, and volunteers, but do include all other people (including children).

Vaccination Mandates and Risk Assessments

Unless covered by a government health order, in order to require workers (clergy, staff and volunteers) to be vaccinated, a risk assessment must be conducted on the role they perform. A template for this can be found on the diocesan website:

[Risk Assessment Form \(on diocesan website\)](#)

Safety Plans

A safety plan is a method of assessing, documenting, implementing, and managing health and safety measures to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 and other health and safety hazards for the users of or attendees of all our activities. These plans also consider the restrictions and limitations in place. Ministry units can use their own, or a template and example is provided on the diocesan website (*see below*).

Further Support and Advice

There are a number of resources available to assist you in your planning and decision making. These are available on the diocesan website:

[Diocesan Website – Health and Safety Page](#)

Here you will find:

- **Information for Ministry Units.**
- **Risk Assessment Form**
- **Safety Plan Template** and example

Further support and advice is also available through cluster and regional meetings or by making direct contact with your Archdeacon or the Diocesan Office.



RED

- Action needed to protect the health system
- Action needed to protect at-risk populations

All Activities

	Indoors	Outdoors
Gathering Limits	200 people	No Limit
Physical Distancing	One person per m ²	Not Required
Face Coverings	Attendees	Not Required
	Workers	Not Required
Record Keeping / QR Scanning	Not required	
Vaccine Mandate	Based on Risk Assessment	
Safety Plan Conducted	✓	

• Gatherings

Gatherings (including worship and services)	✓
Communion	One Kind ✓
	Full Communion ✗
Singing / Choirs	✓ (with masks on)
Sharing the Peace	✗
Baptism (and other close contact ministry)	✓
Funerals and Weddings	✓
Hospitality	✓
Pastoral Visits	✓
Groups and Programmes	✓

• Events

Events	✓
Hospitality	✓ (must be seated and separated)

• Workplaces (other than Gatherings/Events)

Access to Workplaces	Based on Government Mandate or Safety Plan
Church Offices / Workplaces Governing Body Staff / Leadership Teams	Working from home / online meetings may be appropriate in some cases.
Op shops / Local Food Banks etc	Treat as 'retail' within government framework. Open with capacity limits based on 1m distancing

REMEMBER! STAY HOME IF YOU'RE SICK & PRACTISE GOOD HYGIENE



ORANGE

- *Increasing community transmission*
- *Whole of health system is focusing resources but can manage*
- *Increasing risk to at-risk populations*

All Activities

	Indoors	Outdoors
Gathering Limits	No Limit	No Limit
Physical Distancing	<i>Not Required</i>	<i>Not Required</i>
Face Coverings	Attendees	<i>Not Required</i>
	Workers	<i>Not Required</i>
Record Keeping / QR Scanning	<i>Not required</i>	
Vaccine Mandate	Based on Risk Assessment	
Safety Plan Conducted	☑	

• Gatherings

Gatherings (including worship and services)	☑	
Communion	One Kind	☑
	Full Communion	☑
Singing / Choirs	☑	
Sharing the Peace	☑	
Baptism (and other close contact ministry)	☑	
Funerals and Weddings	☑	
Hospitality	☑	
Pastoral Visits	☑	
Groups and Programmes	☑	

• Events

Events	☑
Hospitality	☑

• Workplaces (other than Gatherings/Events)

Access to Workplaces	Based on Government Mandate or Safety Plan
Church Offices / Workplaces Governing Body Staff / Leadership Teams	Workplaces are open. Risk assessment and safety plans in place.
Op shops / Local Food Banks etc	Treat as 'retail' within government framework. Open with capacity limits based on 1m distancing

REMEMBER! STAY HOME IF YOU'RE SICK & PRACTISE GOOD HYGIENE



GREEN

- Limited community transmission
- COVID-19 hospitalisations are at a manageable level
- Whole of health system is ready to respond

All Activities

	Indoors	Outdoors
Gathering Limits	No Limit	No Limit
Physical Distancing	Not Required	Not Required
Face Coverings	Attendees	Not Required
	Workers	Not Required
Record Keeping / QR Scanning	Not required	
Vaccine Mandate	Based on Risk Assessment	
Safety Plan Conducted	☑	

• Gatherings

Gatherings (including worship and services)	☑	
Communion	One Kind	☑
	Full Communion	☑
Singing / Choirs	☑	
Sharing the Peace	☑	
Baptism (and other close contact ministry)	☑	
Funerals and Weddings	☑	
Hospitality	☑	
Pastoral Visits	☑	
Groups and Programmes	☑	

• Events

Events	☑
Hospitality	☑

• Workplaces (other than Gatherings/Events)

Access to Workplaces	Based on Government Mandate or Safety Plan
Church Offices / Workplaces Governing Body Staff / Leadership Teams	Workplaces are open. Risk assessment and safety plans in place.
Op shops / Local Food Banks etc	Treat as 'retail' within government framework. Retail is open.

REMEMBER! STAY HOME IF YOU'RE SICK & PRACTISE GOOD HYGIENE