

## **Direction under section 70 of the Health Act 1956 relating to Close Contacts and Locations of Interest**

On 24 March 2020, the Prime Minister, with the agreement of the Minister of Health, issued an epidemic notice under section 5 of the Epidemic Preparedness Act 2006 in respect of COVID-19. The epidemic notice allows the use of special powers by medical officers of health, pursuant to section 70 of the Health Act 1956, for the purpose of preventing the outbreak or spread of COVID-19. The epidemic notice remains in force.

I, Dr Harriette Carr, Deputy Director of Public Health and Medical Officer of Health, give the following direction under section 70(1)(e), (ea), and (f) of the Health Act 1956 for the purpose of preventing further outbreak or spread of COVID-19, which I consider to be a significant risk to the public.

### **Persons to whom this direction applies**

- 1 This direction applies to every person who—
  - (a) is a close contact of a person (A) who has returned a positive test for COVID-19 (unless a medical officer of health confirms that A is no longer infectious – that is, unless A’s result is indicative of a historical infection); or
  - (b) attended a location of interest at the times and dates (New Zealand Standard Time) as set out at: <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> .

### **What affected persons are required to do**

- 2 A person to whom this direction applies must either comply with the requirements relating to an approved self-isolation plan, as advised by or on behalf of a Medical Officer of Health or the location of interest they attended as set out on the Ministry’s website above:
  - (a) If required to self-monitor for symptoms, follow the instructions as set out on the Ministry’s website.
  - (b) If required to self-isolate at their usual place of residence (which for visitors, includes accommodation), except as required to report and submit for testing as directed:
    - (i) to remain isolated or quarantined at their usual place of residence for a time as advised by, or on behalf of a Medical Officer of Health,
    - (ii) but no longer than the time set out in clause 5 from last potential exposure to COVID-19, as set out in guidance published on the Ministry of Health website.
- 3 Report themselves for medical testing by contacting Healthline (0800 358 5453) or completing the Location of Interest form at: (<https://tracing.covid19.govt.nz/loi>) and advising that they are a contact of a case of COVID-19.

- 4 Submit themselves for medical testing for COVID-19 at a time and place appropriate to their current location and the time of their last potential exposure to COVID-19, as set out in requirements published on the Ministry of Health website, or as advised by a contact tracer.
- 5 Clause 2 applies:
  - (a) to vaccinated persons (being persons who have been vaccinated, for at least 7 days, in accordance with Schedule 1), until they have returned a negative result to a day 5 COVID-19 PCR test and completed 7 days from the date of the person's last potential exposure to COVID-19, as set out in guidance published on the Ministry of Health website ([www.health.govt.nz](http://www.health.govt.nz))
  - (b) to unvaccinated persons (being persons who are not vaccinated, for at least 10 days, in accordance with Schedule 1), until they have returned a negative result to a day 8 COVID-19 PCR test and completed 10 days from the date of the person's last potential exposure to COVID-19, as set out in guidance published on the Ministry of Health website ([www.health.govt.nz](http://www.health.govt.nz)).
  - (c) to persons living in the same household as a case (regardless of their vaccination status) until they have returned a negative result to a day 8 COVID-19 PCR test and completed 10 days from the date of the person's last potential exposure to COVID-19, as set out in guidance published on the Ministry of Health website ([www.health.govt.nz](http://www.health.govt.nz))
  - (d) to any person subject to the direction, including as listed at clause 5 (a) and (b) and regardless of vaccination status, who refuses or otherwise is not tested in accordance with clause 4, for 14 days from the date of the person's last potential exposure to COVID-19.

### Exception

- 6 The direction does not apply to persons who are required to provide an essential health service (being a service provided for the purpose of assessing, improving, protecting, or managing the physical or mental health of individuals or groups of individuals) or managed isolation or quarantine services, as long as the following conditions are met:
  - (a) The person is vaccinated in accordance with Schedule 1;
  - (b) The person submits to daily symptom checks and complies with testing requirements;
  - (c) The person complies with the other requirements of a close contact while not at work (where they are not working from their usual place of residence).

### Definitions

- 7 The following definition applies:

**Close contact** is a person who has exposure to the same air as a confirmed (or probable) case during the case's infectious period that is assessed as significant,

without appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). Exposure to the same air may include those in a setting immediately after the case, as well as while the case was present. Face-to-face exposure in an enclosed environment that is more than fleeting, and face-to-face contact outdoors within 2 metres for more than 15 minutes, will usually be considered close contact.

### **Revocation**

- 8 The Direction under s 70 of the Health Act 1956: Locations of Interest dated 29 August 2021, is revoked, and replaced by this notice.

### **Commencement**

- 9 This notice commences at 11:59pm on 24 December 2021.

### **Relevant information**

Failure or refusal to comply with this direction is an offence under section 72 of the Health Act 1956, punishable by imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months, a fine not exceeding \$4,000, or both.

Signed:



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Dr Harriette Carr

Medical Officer of Health

Dated: 24 December 2021

## **Schedule 1**

Vaccinated means the person has received all of the necessary doses of a COVID-19 vaccine or combination of COVID-19 vaccines specified in the first column of the table in Schedule 3 of the COVID-19 Public Health Response (Vaccinations) Order 2021, administered in accordance with the requirements specified for that vaccine or combination of vaccines in the second column of that table.

The table is available at:

<https://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2021/0094/latest/LMS573022.html>