

Practice Guidelines – COVID-19 – Level 2

These practice guidelines have been prepared on the basis of the current information available moving into Level 2 released by the New Zealand Government on Monday, 11 May 2020 at 4pm.

Level 2 starts on Thursday, 14 May 2020. Information is continuously changing. It is advisable to keep monitoring COVID19.govt.nz and all information available for our industry including MBIE website, business.govt.nz, Ministry of Health website etc.

Key control principles at Alert Level 2:

Alert Level 2 is not life as normal, some restrictions and other measures remain in place to reduce the risk of transmission.

- The need to maintain physical distancing.
- The need to keep tight controls in place at borders.
- Wide-scale testing continues.
- Finding and self-isolating anyone who is unwell and their close contacts.
- There will be measures in place to allow some safe travel and socialising.
- Only small, controlled gatherings are permitted.
- Early childhood centres, schools and tertiary organisations will see most people returning — with controls in place.
- Physical distancing, hygiene standards and contact registers will make businesses safe.

Pre-qualifying and Contact Tracing:

Conduct all property management with care and precaution. Pre-qualify by asking questions – whether anyone living or staying at the property has been diagnosed with COVID-19, has any symptoms of COVID-19 or whether tenants/occupiers have arrived from overseas in the last 14 days and are in self-isolation

Remember to also ask whether anyone has had any of the usual symptoms:

- a cough
- a high temperature (at least 38°C)
- shortness of breath.
- sore throat
- sneezing and runny nose
- temporary loss of smell

Ask by telephone and then follow up by email. Make a file note of the response in your property management software. If you don't receive a written response to your email, you have had the conversation to assess the risk before going into the property or sending a contractor to attend a maintenance item.

Pre-qualify everyone – e.g. contractors, all people interested in attending a viewing etc. Keep contact registers. Name, date, time, address, email, telephone, purpose for attendance.

Inspections:

- Routine inspections may resume.
- Reschedule previously missed inspections prioritising those that were due at the beginning of Level 4. Try not to rush because there is a backlog. Inspections are important to do well. Only carry them out if it is safe to do so.
- Exercise all care and caution as per the pre-cautions above. Pre-qualify before attending any inspections.
- Exercise physical distancing maintaining 1m as a minimum.
- Observe all hygiene requirements – hand sanitising when entering and exiting a property – carry your own PPE.
- Clean any surfaces that were touched.

Moving In and Moving Outs:

- Moving in and out of property is allowed. Exercise physical distancing maintaining 1m as a minimum.
- Observe all hygiene requirements – hand-sanitising when entering and exiting property carry your own PPE.
- Tenants will be able to move house between regions.

Bond Inspections:

- Conduct with care and precaution. Pre-qualify before going to the property.
- Prepare your own personal protection equipment (PPE) kit before going into properties to conduct bond inspections. You may wish to consider engaging a cleaner as an additional measure – work with your landlord clients. The cleaner should also provide you with their protocols for keeping themselves safe.

Tenancy Agreements:

- Continue where possible to have contactless processes. For example, execute Tenancy Agreements electronically.

Maintenance:

- Tradespeople to provide you with their safety plan which includes COVID-19 practices. It is also important to prequalify Tradespeople.
- Tradespeople to observe physical distancing.
- Keep a register of all tradespeople that attend a property – name, date, time, their contact details and reason for attendance.

- Ask Tradespeople to clean any surfaces they may have touched in the course of carrying out the maintenance work.
- Proactive/programmed maintenance may resume.

Rental Appraisals:

- Do desktop appraisals where possible. It is permissible to go to a property to do an appraisal. Same principles apply for prequalifying whether it is safe to do so and observing physical distancing.

Viewings/Showings:

- Limit the number of people that can attend a viewing to observe social and physical distancing requirements (at least 1m). You may need to arrange viewings to limited numbers to ensure physical distancing. You may also need to provide specific instructions for various properties depending on the size or layout of the property.
- The Tenant should grant permission for the viewing as is usual. Tenants should not withhold permission unreasonably.
- Pre-qualify whether safe to conduct the viewing. Do this every time there is a viewing.
- Make a record of every person that you are in contact with – their name, telephone number, their current address and email address.
- It is best if tenants/occupiers are not present while the viewing is underway. If they are present, then ensure physical distancing can be maintained.
- All attendees to be provided with information about hygiene at the property and to not touch anything at the property. This can be emailed through your viewings software when they register to attend the viewing. It is advisable for the property manager to wipe down any door handles with cleaning products just to be safe. Wear PPE and dispose of (take off site in a plastic bag and throw out safely).