



Guidance for winegrowers on the new traffic light system

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Introduction

The Government has announced major changes to the COVID-19 Protection Framework (the Traffic Light System). Most of the changes will come into effect from **11.59pm on Friday 25 March 2022**. Changes relating to the use of My Vaccine Pass and other vaccination mandates come into effect from **11.59pm 4 April 2022**.

The changes make the system simpler while retaining the restrictions considered to be most effective at reducing the spread of COVID-19. We have significantly streamlined our guidance to reflect the simplified system. Our previous guidance is available [here](#) if you require further information about a particular topic (e.g., health and safety, planning for vintage).

This information represents NZW's best understanding of the situation. As you know, the COVID-19 situation can change very quickly, and we will endeavour to keep this document updated as frequently as possible. Where we are waiting on clarification on a particular point, or where there is uncertainty, this will be noted in the guidance. Updates in the latest version will be **highlighted in yellow**.

This guidance is focused on business operations. The latest information for individuals and households is available at www.covid19.govt.nz

Over time, restrictions will vary between regions, so take note of any particular requirements within your region.

If you have any questions, please email covidresponse@nzwine.com.

Key updates

Changes to the traffic light system

From **11.59pm Friday 25 March 2022** the traffic light system is changing. A summary of the changes is set out below. More information can be found [here](#).

The Government is still working on updating its guidance following the announcement of the changes to the traffic light system. We will update this guidance once we know more.

The key changes are:

- **Contact tracing is no longer required.** Businesses do not have to display a QR code poster or have mandatory record keeping. Visitors/customers do not have to scan in.
- **Capacity limits removed for outdoor events** (at all levels).
- **Increased capacity limit for indoor activities at red** (from 100 to 200 people, based on 1m distancing).
- **Face masks are not required outdoors.**

Vaccine mandate changes

In addition, from **11.59pm on 4 April**, there will be **no requirement to use My Vaccine Passes**. This also means that vaccination mandates will lift for those covered by the My Vaccine Pass government

mandate (e.g., events and dine-in hospitality businesses). Mandates will remain in place for only a small number of sectors e.g., health and disability workers, prison staff and border workers.

Businesses will still be able to voluntarily introduce workforce vaccination requirements following their own health and safety risk assessment. Given the recent Government announcement on vaccination mandates and the public health advice that the case for vaccination requirements has become more finely balanced, NZW strongly encourages members to review their risk assessments and consider whether any workforce vaccination requirements are appropriate. We understand that MBIE and WorkSafe will be providing updated guidance for businesses, reflecting current public health advice in the coming weeks.

Similarly, businesses currently using My Vaccine Pass requirements can choose whether to continue to use them as a condition of entry if they would like to.

Requirements for all businesses under the traffic light system

The system is based on three levels of restrictions at **green**, **orange** and **red**. All three traffic light colours operate on the basis that COVID-19 is in the community.

When operating in the new simplified traffic light system, we recommend that members continue to carefully consider the risks posed by COVID-19 and design systems for their operations and for their workers which eliminate or minimise those risks.

Remember - at any setting of the traffic light system, **businesses must operate safely** and eliminate transmission risks where possible. This includes your workers, suppliers, customers, and anyone else who you may interact with. Your workers should feel safe coming to work. Specific health and safety guidance is available on our [practical advice](#) page and in our previous traffic light guidance document available [here](#).

Contact tracing is no longer required: Businesses may choose to undertake contact tracing of potential close contacts in the workplace, if considered useful (e.g., to maintain business continuity). However, this is not mandatory and will not need to be reported to health officials.

Vineyards and wineries are able to operate at all traffic light levels; however, at **red light** working from home is encouraged where possible.

Self-isolation and isolation periods

Everyone who tests positive for COVID-19 and everyone who lives with them (household contacts) needs to self-isolate. Cases and household contacts will now self-release at the end of the required isolation period:

Cases

The isolation period for positive cases is 7 days. This isolation period applies regardless of vaccination status.

Cases may self-release themselves from isolation once the relevant isolation period has been completed. Cases do not need to wait for an official message or release to leave. If a case is still sick at the end of the isolation period, they should stay home until they are well.

A negative test is not required to leave isolation. Cases may still return a positive test but that does not mean they are infectious.

Once a case has recovered from COVID-19, they will not need to isolate again for 3 months if someone else in their household tests positive during that time.

More information for positive cases can be found [here](#).

Household contacts

A Household contact is a person who:

- Normally shares a residence (e.g., house or flat) with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 (a case) either on a permanent or part time, or shared custody basis; **AND**
- Spent at least one night or day (more than 8 hours) in that residence while the case was infectious.

The Government has clarified that the following people are **not** Household Contacts but may be Close Contacts:

- People that live in the same group accommodation (boarding houses, hostels, backpackers) as the case; or
- If they don't live with the case but may have spent the night together.

This distinction is important for workers in shared accommodation (e.g., RSE workers). Those persons are not household contacts and do not have to self-isolate if a case was to occur at the group accommodation.

Currently, Household Contacts must:

- **Self-isolate for 7days** from the day that the first person in the household receives their positive test result (or is notified that they are a probable case) until the case completes their 7 days of self-isolation.
- Get a rapid antigen test when the first case in your house gets to days 3 and 7 of their isolation or if symptoms develop at any stage.
- Get a rapid antigen test immediately if symptoms develop at any stage.
- Avoid or minimise contact with the person with COVID-19 as much as possible during your isolation period.

If all tests are negative **and** no symptoms appear, household contacts can complete isolation at the same time as the first person in the household with COVID-19.

More information for household contacts can be found [here](#).

Close Contacts

Close contacts no longer need to self-isolate but should self-monitor for symptoms for 10 days and get a RAT test immediately if symptoms develop.

A close contact is a person that has had contact with a person with COVID-19 during their infectious period (**two days before** symptom onset or the date they were tested (if they have no symptoms)).

The Ministry of Health defines a Close Contact as a person that has:

- Been close (within 1.5m) to a positive case for more than 15 minutes **and** the case was not wearing a mask or wearing it properly; **OR**
- Had direct contact with respiratory secretions or saliva from a case (e.g., kissing, shared a cigarette, vape or drink bottle, or if the person coughed or sneezed directly on you); **OR**

- Spent time in an indoor space for more than 1 hour with a case **and** at least one of the following:
 - The case was singing, shouting, smoking, vaping, exercising, or dancing
 - The case was not wearing a mask or wasn't wearing it properly
 - The indoor space was poorly ventilated (e.g., there were no windows or doors open)
 - The indoor space was smaller than 100m² (about three double garages).

More information about close contacts can be found [here](#).

Businesses should refer to the guidance on the Ministry of Health's website if you are notified of a positive case at your business. Guidance for businesses is available [here](#).

Please also refer to NZW's [Health and Safety Planning Guidance](#) for information as to measures that can be taken to minimise close contact between workers.

Returning to work at Phase 3

Both of the return to work pathways detailed below are available to contacts that are required to isolate (household contacts) to return to work during their isolation period.

Note: close contacts (that are not household contacts) are no longer required to self-isolate and are able to remain at work as normal. They do not need to utilise the return-to-work pathways.

More details about these pathways are set out below and is available [here](#).

Pathway 1: Bubble of One

If your worker is a household contact of a positive case of COVID-19, they can continue to work during their self-isolation period if they are:

- Vaccinated;
- Asymptomatic;
- Not customer facing; and
- Able to maintain an individual "bubble of one" while at work (whether indoors or outdoors).

Under this option workers will not be required to undertake rapid antigen testing to return to work and businesses are not required to register. 'Bubbles of One' are available to all businesses and there is no limit on the number of 'bubbles of one' you can have at your business.

To maintain a Bubble of One at work the worker must:

- **Work in single indoor or outdoor space with no other person present** in that space. A single indoor space is defined as a space with walls (whether permanent or temporary) that substantially divide that space from other spaces. A single outdoor space is defined as a space with walls (whether permanent or temporary) that substantially divide that space from other spaces; or all people in that space are separated by at least 2 metres from other people who are outside of that space.
- **Use a medical mask¹ at all times** (including before entry to the workplace) and change these as needed during the day.
- **Comply with any other infection prevention and control protocols at work** (ie your health and safety measures).

¹ For example, a type IIR/Level 2 mask or above. This includes the blue medical masks that are commonly available. See the below guidance on mask requirements for more details.

- **Travel solo to, from and around work** or between jobs (public transport must not be used)
- **Eat alone** in a well-ventilated space, outdoors where possible.
- Use a **dedicated bathroom** (if this is not possible, no others should be present in the bathroom while the worker is using it).
- Ensure that if symptoms develop the worker leaves the workplace and gets a test immediately (as per the [public health advice](#) for close contacts with symptoms).
- Continue participating in regular workplace surveillance testing (if applicable).

Outside of work, the worker must self-isolate as required by the [Ministry of Health](#). Generally, this means the worker cannot go anywhere other than work or home and must undergo testing as required. If at any point the worker receives a positive test or become symptomatic they must return to isolation and get a PCR test, meaning they will be unable to attend the workplace.

We consider this pathway will be most easily available for vineyard workers, truck, tractor and harvest drivers etc.

Pathway 2: Close Contact Exemption Scheme

This option is only available to “critical sectors”, including food production (which includes grape and wine production and packaging).

This option enables workers at registered critical services who are household contacts of a positive COVID-19 case to continue to work during their self-isolation period as long as they are:

- Vaccinated;
- Asymptomatic; and
- Return a negative rapid antigen test (RAT) **prior to** each day/shift they are at work during the isolation period. The test must be taken **before** leaving their place of self-isolation.

Workers must self-report their daily test result via a portal on their individual My Covid Record. Video instructions on how to self-report a test result on My Covid Record is available [here](#). If a worker cannot access My Covid Record they should call 0800 222 478 for assistance. Workers must also advise their employer of their test results before leaving their place of self-isolation and attending work.

While the worker is at the workplace the following safety protocols must be adhered to:

- **Daily symptom check** and **daily RAT before** leaving their place of self-isolation;
- **Use a medical mask³ at all times** (put on before entry to the workplace) and change these as needed during the day.
- **Comply with any other infection prevention and control protocols at work** (ie your health and safety measures).
- **Travel solo to, from and around work** or between jobs where possible.
- Ensure **good ventilation** when in small spaces and **masks must be worn by everyone present**.
- When mask is removed (e.g., for eating or drinking) physical distancing must be maintained. The worker should **eat alone** in a well-ventilated space, outdoors where possible.
- Continue regular workplace surveillance testing (if applicable).

Outside of work, the worker must still self-isolate as required by the [Ministry of Health](#). Generally, this means the worker cannot go anywhere other than work or home and they must still undertake

testing as required. If at any point the worker receives a positive test or become symptomatic they must return to isolation and get a PCR test, meaning they will be unable to attend the workplace.

How to register your business

Businesses that wish to utilise this scheme **must register themselves** on the Close Contact Exemption Scheme Critical Services Register through Business Connect [here](#). Registrations can be made by the business owner, managers or an individual nominated by one of those people on behalf of the business.

We understand that registration will be automatically approved, but MPI will also be reviewing registrations.

NZW has published additional guidance to assist with the registration process - available [here](#)

Access to RATs under the Close Contact Exemption Scheme

Businesses can either supply RATs to their workers (if available) themselves **or** workers / businesses will be able to order free RATs from the Ministry of Health as part of this scheme.

Critical workers can order RATs via the online [Rapid Antigen Test Order Form](#). This form must be completed to get an order number. If you cannot access the form you can call 0800 222 478 and follow the prompts. After submitting the form, you will receive a confirmation email containing the RAT Order Number. You can then pick up your tests from the chosen RAT collection site (see below).

Workers will be able to collect free RATs from a Ministry of Health collection site. The locations of the collection sites in each region are available on the drop-down menu on the Order Form. You can also find the locations of collection sites in your region on the [Healthpoint](#) website.

Workers need to present the following documents when collecting RATs:

- A copy of the letter the business received from the Critical Services Register confirming registration (from MBIE)
- Personal ID (e.g., drivers licence or passport).
- Confirmation that the worker is a household contact (e.g., text message). If a worker has not received confirmation that they are a close contact they need to call Healthline or self-identify as a close contact via the webform.

RATs for worksites with multiple contacts

Businesses who have 15 or more household contacts within their business can now arrange delivery of RATs direct to their business, rather than sending their workers to a distribution hub. More details about how to access RATs in this way is available [here](#).

Additional information about access to and the use of RATs is available [here](#), including specific guidance for critical workers. That guidance sets out the process for collecting and undertaking RATs as part this scheme. We recommend you review that guidance if your business is utilising this pathway.

Additional details about the scheme and the process are available [here](#).

Administering RATs

Detailed guidance about how to administer RATs and how to report test results on My Covid Record is available [here](#). This includes a useful pdf guide for workers undertaking RATs for this scheme.

Mask requirements

Masks are an important part of the response to the omicron outbreak. These requirements apply to hospitality businesses, events and gatherings (as well as close proximity businesses).

- Workers who are subject to a vaccination mandate are required to wear a **medical grade mask** when working in public facing roles. This means that staff working in public facing roles in cellar doors, winery restaurants / cafes and at events need to wear medical grade masks. If not in a public facing role, medical grade masks are not required but those workers are still required to wear a mask.
- Workers who are utilising either of the return-to-work pathways detailed above must wear a **medical grade mask** at all times.
- Those attending a food and drink business, close proximity business, and events and gatherings must wear a mask. Masks may be removed when attendees are seated, eating, drinking or exercising. Attendees at a gathering where they have exclusive use of the venue (e.g., weddings) do not need to wear a face mask.
- Face coverings must be an actual mask and attached to the head by loops around the ears or head. Scarves, bandannas or t-shirts are not acceptable.

As far as we are aware mask requirements at orange and green remain the same but this may change in the future. You can find detailed information about face mask requirements (including how to wear a face mask safely) [here](#).

Types of Masks

Information about some different types of face masks is available [here](#).

Masks and respirators provide different levels of protection depending on the type of mask and how they are used.

Disposable Medical Grade Masks

A certified, well fitting medical mask (sometimes called surgical or procedure masks) offers a good level of protection against COVID-19. They are more effective than reusable fabric masks.

Medical grade masks **must** be worn by some workers (including anyone subject to the My Vaccine Pass Mandate and workers utilising either of the return-to-work pathways).

A medical grade mask/face covering is a face covering that meets or exceeds any of the following standards:

- **Type IIR** of BS EN 14683:2019 Medical Face Masks. Requirements and Test methods;
- **Level 2** of ASTM F2100-21 Standard Specification for Performance of Materials Used in Medical Face Masks; or
- **AS 4381:2015** single use face masks or use in health care.

Disposable medical masks can be purchased from retail stores such as supermarkets or pharmacies. When purchasing, check the box to ensure it complies with the requirements as not all disposable masks meet the standards.

Medical masks are typically flat or pleated. They are affixed to the head with straps that go around the ears, or head, or both. It is important to wear a mask correctly. The mask should fit securely over the nose, mouth and chin with no gaps at the side.

A video demonstrating how to wear a medical (called a surgical mask in the video) and how to improve the fit of a surgical mask is available [here](#)

Disposable N95/P2 particulate respirators

Disposable high-filtration masks or particulate respirators generally offer the highest level of protection, when used correctly. These types of masks also meet the legal requirements for workers required to wear medical grade masks.

To be effective, a tight facial seal covering the nose, mouth and chin is required. When fitting a P2/N95 masks it is important to follow the manufacturing instructions to ensure it is fitted correctly. A video demonstrating how to generally fit an N95/P2 mask is available [here](#).

Hospitality, events and gatherings

This guidance refers to the term 'hospitality businesses', which is the term that the Government has referred to in its guidance so far. The Order refers to hospitality businesses as 'food and drink business or services', this includes winery cafes, restaurants and cellar doors. In addition, cellar doors may operate as a purely retail space and follow the retail requirements (instead of the hospitality requirements).

From midnight 4 April 2022, there is **no requirement to use My Vaccine Passes**. Until 4 April, where My Vaccine Passes are not used, current restrictions remain. However, after 4 April, the same restrictions (e.g., capacity limits) will apply to everyone.

After 4 April, Businesses may still choose to use the My Vaccine Pass system if they wish.

Where there are number limits (e.g., at **red light**), these apply to a **defined space or to the premises**. A defined space is:

- an indoor area that has no direct airflow to another indoor area that is being used; or
- an outdoor area that is separated from other outdoor areas by 2 metres.

A premises can have more than one defined space. If you are setting up multiple defined spaces in your premises, you must have processes to ensure that people using each space (other than workers) do not mix closer than 2 metres with other persons using, entering or leaving the premises. This means that people from different defined areas cannot mix in common spaces such as entrances, exits and toilets.

In practice, this means that if you have a restaurant and a cellar door that have separate entrances, bathrooms etc you can host a gathering of up to 200 people (plus staff) in the restaurant, without that restricting the numbers you can host in the cellar door.

Number limits apply to attendees only, not to your workers.

Other tips for hospitality, events and gatherings in the traffic light system:

- **Safe consumption of alcohol:** As is required by your licence, you need to ensure customers consume alcohol safely. Note that intoxicated customers may be less willing or able to comply with the other restrictions (e.g., physical distancing).

- **Payment:** We recommend that payment should be taken at the table (i.e., you go to the customer, rather than them coming to you). This could be done via a mobile EFTPOS machine. While you can take cash, it is not recommended, and if you do choose to take cash you should consider how you will reduce the risks associated with this.
- **Reducing touchpoints:** Consider how you can minimise the number of surfaces that customers need to touch. As well as things like payWave, this could include using laminated tasting notes or menus, that can be easily sanitised.
- **Spittoons:** Spittoons are a particular risk for cellar doors or other facilities offering wine tastings. You should of course continue to provide spittoons as part of your host responsibility obligations; however, we recommend that spittoons should be washed between each group and should not be shared between different groups.

For hospitality businesses at each traffic light -

At red:

- **With My Vaccine Pass:** There is a cap of 200 people (plus staff) for indoor activities and there must be 1 metre distancing between groups. [This means that you may not be able to physically distance and have 200 people.] We recommend that your displays (e.g., price lists at a cellar door) are easily visible from wherever your customers will be, so they are not tempted to wander around the premises to view them.
- People must also be seated at a table at all times when on the premises, except in the following circumstances:
 - entering or departing;
 - using a toilet or bathroom; and
 - paying.
- Face Masks are required for customers in indoor settings. Masks may be removed when seated and to eat and drink. Face masks must be worn when paying, using the bathroom and entering and exiting the venue.
- There are no capacity limits for outdoor hospitality activities. Face masks are not required outdoors.
- **Without My Vaccine Pass:** Only contactless operations (e.g., click and collect / takeaway only) are permitted. From midnight 4 April 2022, these restrictions will be lifted. In the meantime, takeaway only services, including hospitality businesses and cellar doors should follow the rules for retail.

Workers must wear masks regardless of whether My Vaccine Pass is used. Medical grade masks must be worn by workers in public facing roles (e.g., wait staff).

At orange:

- **With My Vaccine Pass:** Your business can operate without any number limits.
- Face Masks are required for customers in indoor settings. Masks may be removed when seated and to eat and drink. Face masks must be worn when paying, using the bathroom and entering and exiting the venue.
- **Without My Vaccine Pass:** Only contactless operations (e.g., click and collect / takeaway only) are permitted. From midnight 4 April 2022, these restrictions will be lifted.

Face masks are required for workers regardless of whether My Vaccine Pass is used. Medical grade masks must be worn by workers in public facing roles (e.g., wait staff).

At green:

- **No restrictions.** Good health behaviours are encouraged.

Face masks are recommended but not required.

Events and gatherings

Definitions:

- An 'event' includes an activity organised by a business or service that is held at commercial or private premises. This includes where you may hire out part of your business for a concert or conference (for example).
- A 'gathering' is people who are intermingling as a group, and includes social activities (e.g., weddings).

If you have an event facility people can hire where food and drink is provided for consumption, or if you host a private event (e.g., a concert/conference):

At red:

- **With My Vaccine Pass:** The capacity limits are the same as for hospitality above, except that only food and beverage service must be kept seated and separated.
- At gatherings, people do not need to physically distance
- **Without My Vaccine Pass:** You can only host gatherings (e.g., a wedding), with a maximum of 25 people in a defined space.

In both situations, masks are:

- required for *workers* at food and drink business and services, including within events (they are strongly encouraged for workers at other events, excluding performers where it is impractical).
- required for workers at gatherings. Workers in public facing roles (eg wait staff) must wear a medical grade mask.
- Required for attendees unless
- for gatherings, face masks are not required for attendees where the group have the exclusive use of the venue (e.g., weddings).

At orange:

- **With My Vaccine Pass:** Your business can operate without any number limits.
- **Without My Vaccine Pass:** You can only host gatherings (e.g., a wedding), with a maximum of 50 people in a defined space.

Face coverings are required for *workers* at food and drink business and services, including within events (they are strongly encouraged for workers at other events, excluding performers where it is impractical). Attendees are encouraged to wear masks but they are not required.

At green:

- **With My Vaccine Pass:** Your business can operate without any number limits.
- **Without My Vaccine Pass:** Your business can open with up to 100 people maximum (based on 1 metre distancing). The requirements are the same as for hospitality at red light with My

Vaccine Pass, except that only food and beverage service is required to be seated and separated.

Face coverings are encouraged.

Retail shops

You may wish to operate your cellar door as purely a retail business (not offering tastings and only selling wine to takeaway). Retail businesses are not required to use My Vaccine Passes but can choose to. However, under the traffic light system, the applicable restrictions are the same for those businesses whether or not they are used.

Under **red** and **orange** lights:

- Retail may open with capacity limits based on 1m distancing (not including workers). This means the maximum number of people who could occupy the space if each person was one metre apart – people do not need to do so.
- Face masks are **mandatory** for both staff and customers (unless a person is exempt).

Under **green** light:

- Retail may open without number limits.
- face masks are recommended but not mandatory.

If your business offers mixed retail and hospitality operations (i.e., tastings), our understanding [now confirmed by MPI] is that you should follow the more stringent hospitality requirements discussed above.