

# COVID-19 Message Grid

## 16 February 2022

This contains the most up-to-date and approved messaging on key COVID-19 matters.

Information that changes or is added between grids will be highlighted. Please ensure you are using the most up to date version.

This version was current at 16/02/2022 4:39 pm.

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## Unite Against COVID-19

Topic	Key Message	Supporting Messages	Notes
Omicron response	New Zealanders advised to get boosted and keep doing the basics well	<p>The key features of the next phase of the Government’s Omicron response are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a reduction in isolation periods required for cases and household contacts (down to 10 days) and other close contacts (down to 7 days);</li> <li>the use of Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) to allow critical workers who are close contacts of a case to be able to go to work if they test negative;</li> </ul>	MoH PR, 16 Feb

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a greater use of digital tools to support cases and contacts.</li> <li>• there will continue to be a strong focus on vaccination.</li> </ul>	
Omicron response	Changes to case notification and reporting	<p>Cases will now be notified by text message, providing links to information on self-isolation, how to tell others they have COVID-19, how to look after themselves, and what help is available.</p> <p>Those who test positive will fill in a web-based form to help ensure that those with the highest needs, either health or welfare, are prioritised and managed accordingly.</p> <p>Cases will self-identify their close contacts online for contact tracing purposes and to help identify high risk exposure events. They will also be required to inform their employer themselves.</p> <p>Contacts will also be notified via text message and will receive links to the information they need to self-manage. QR scans, Bluetooth and location of interest will continue to be used to identify contacts along with the cases own recollection of who they have interacted with, or where they have been.</p>	MoH PR, 16 Feb
Income support	Hardship assistance for low income workers extended through to 30 June	<p>The increased income limits mean single people 18 years and over, earning under \$800 a week, or couples earning under \$1600 a week may be eligible for assistance.</p> <p>This extra support will help cover food and essential items for people in need, and supports the Government's COVID-19 response by providing people with more options for support if they need to self-isolate.</p> <p>The Government increased the income threshold initially for a 4-month period, today's announcement extends these income limits for a further 4 months. This is an investment of up to \$9 million.</p>	Min. Sepuloni PR, 16 Feb
Health update	Cases, testing and contact tracing	<b>Hospitalisations</b>	MoH site, 16 Feb

There are currently 56 people in hospitals across New Zealand.

No cases are in high dependency or intensive care units.

**Cases**

There are 1160 new cases in the community, and 43 new cases identified at the border.

**Testing**

28,140 tests processed nationwide in the last 24 hours.

Number of Rapid Antigen Tests in New Zealand:  
7,200,000

## Vaccinations

Topic	Key message	Supporting messages	Notes
Booster programme update	Yesterday, 46,156 booster doses were administered, bringing the total to 2,006,361 (62% of eligible people)	<p>The vaccine remains the best defence against COVID-19. People who are vaccinated are less likely to get seriously unwell or be hospitalised than people who haven't been vaccinated.</p> <p>The booster vaccine offers a high level of protection against Omicron. People are encouraged to get a booster as soon as possible if it has been 3 months since their last dose.</p> <p>Omicron is highly transmissible, but everyone can play their part to slow the spread of the virus, help protect vulnerable people from being infected, and ensure the health system is able to manage extra demand for services.</p>	MoH site, 16 Feb
Vaccination progress	95% of New Zealanders have had two vaccine doses	Vaccines administered to date (percentage of eligible people): 4,054,998 first doses (96%); 3,986,480 second doses (95%).	MoH site, 16 Feb

Paediatric vaccines	1,466 paediatric doses administered yesterday	To date, 217,979 first doses have been administered to 5-11-year-olds (46%).  Detailed information on COVID-19 vaccines for children can be found at the MoH and UAC websites:  <a href="#">COVID-19 vaccine and children: Information for parents and caregivers   Ministry of Health NZ</a>  <a href="#">How children and young people can get vaccinated   Unite against COVID-19 (covid19.govt.nz)</a>	MoH site, 15 Feb; UAC and MoH sites.
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## International travel

Topic	Key message	Supporting messages	Notes
Tonga QFT	Due to increasing COVID-19 cases, Tonga no longer meets criteria to be eligible for quarantine-free travel (QFT) with New Zealand	<p>Passengers arriving on today's flight will undertake a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) on days 0/1 and 5/6 but will not be required to enter self-isolation unless they test positive.</p> <p>Those arriving on 22 February flight and after will be required to self-isolate for 7 days on arrival in New Zealand and undertake a RAT on days 0/1 and 5/6.</p> <p>All travellers should monitor for symptoms and requested to avoid high-risk settings such as hospitality and large gatherings. They must report any positive RAT and take a follow-up PCR test to confirm their result. If they test positive standard isolation measures will be applied to them.</p>	MoH PR, 14 Feb
Reconnecting NZ – Testing and Self-isolation	New self-isolation rules for travellers to New Zealand released	<p><b>Before departure</b>, travellers will have the option of three types of pre departure tests: a PCR test within 48 hours of flying, or a supervised RAT or LAMP test within 24 hours. Vaccination requirements for self-isolation have been updated and will apply to travellers aged 17 years and older.</p> <p><b>On arrival</b>, travellers will need to download the NZ COVID Tracer app. Travellers who are self-isolating will be given three RATs. They must travel directly to their accommodation – avoiding entering shops and</p>	Min Hipkins PR, 15 Feb

businesses; travellers must wear a mask until they reach their accommodation, and ensure anyone picking them up wears a mask. They should sanitise their hands regularly, and maintain physical distancing as much as possible.

**To self-isolate**, travellers will follow similar protocols as community close contacts in phase 2 of the Omicron plan. These include an isolation period of 7 full days and reporting the results of two RATs – one on day 0/1 and one on day 5/6. A positive result will need to be followed with a PCR test to monitor for any new COVID-19 variants.

Travellers can form a bubble with family or friends, who can continue to go to work or school, but must minimise contact with others as much as possible. No visitors are allowed.

Full details for the traveller journey and self-isolation process for individuals and groups are [on the Unite against COVID-19 website](#).