

NZ Safety Alert

3 December 2021

Let's work together to keep ourselves and our workers safe

Move to the Covid-19 Framework

The Covid-19 Protection Framework, also known as the traffic light system, replaced the Alert Level system at 11.59pm on Thursday 2 December 2021.

The new framework allows businesses to open and operate in a way that is as close to normal for vaccinated people while minimising the virus' spread.

The AQA and MinEx support a robust risk-based assessment of the risks to workers and others, and individual employer's rights to mandate vaccinations. Employers can require work to be done by a vaccinated employee, if a risk assessment identifies this is necessary to protect the health and safety of workers and/or the public, however you should not rely on just vaccinations and continue with other controls such as basic hygiene, wearing masks where appropriate, contact tracing, social distancing and getting tested if symptomatic.

WorkSafe, as the regulator, have provided [guidance on completing a risk assessment](#) which includes the following questions:

- How many people does the employee carrying out that work come into contact with? (**very few = lower risk; many = higher risk**)
- How easy will it be to identify the people who the employee comes into contact with? (**easy to identify, such as co-workers = lower risk; difficult to identify, such as unknown members of public = higher risk**)
- How close is the employee carrying out the tasks in proximity to other people? (**2 metres or more in an outdoor space = lower risk; close physical contact in an indoor environment = higher risk**)
- How long does the work require the employee to be in that proximity to other people? (**brief contact = lower risk; lengthy contact = higher risk**)
- Does the work involve regular interaction with people considered at higher risk of severe illness from Covid-19, such as people with underlying health conditions? (**little to none = lower risk; whole time = higher risk**)
- What is the risk of Covid-19 infection and transmission in the work environment when compared to the risk outside work? (**equal to outside work = lower risk; higher than outside work = higher risk**)
- Will the work continue to involve regular interaction with unknown people if the region is at a higher traffic light setting? (**no = lower risk; yes = higher risk**).

If you require any information, or advice, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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Know of an incident or near miss? Please share the learnings with us.