



The Right Honourable Dame Helen Winkelmann

CHIEF JUSTICE OF NEW ZEALAND | TE TUMU WHAKAWĀ O AOTEAROA

18 September 2020

MEDIA STATEMENT

JURY TRIALS ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING 21 SEPTEMBER

The Government has announced the next review of Alert Levels will occur on Monday 21 September. It has agreed in principle to move most of New Zealand down to Alert Level 1 and Auckland to Alert Level 2 with eased restrictions on gatherings.

Those in-principle decisions will be confirmed on 21 September and would, if confirmed, take effect as follows:

- For Auckland, at 11:59pm on Wednesday 23 September.
- For the rest of New Zealand, at 11:59pm on Monday 21 September.

This statement explains the approach the courts will take next week if the Alert Levels change.

Jury trials in areas other than Auckland

Arrangements for jurors

The Chief Justice has announced that the precautions currently in place for jurors at Alert Level 2 will not change next week. Perspex screens will remain in the jury boxes in most courtrooms and provision will be made for physical distancing for jurors during empanelling, in the jury box and in jury retiring rooms. The need for these additional precautions will be reviewed from time to time.

General safety arrangements

Members of the public will be able to attend court without permission of a judge.

Everyone attending court will continue to be encouraged to wear masks and to practise physical distancing.

No thermal imaging will occur at the security screening stations.

Enhanced cleaning regimes will be maintained, and soap, towels, sanitiser and personal protective equipment will continue to be readily available.

Auckland Jury trials

The Chief Justice has announced that regardless of any reduction to alert level provisions for Auckland next week, jury trials will continue under the arrangements for Alert Level 2 for the remainder of the week of 21 September.

Precautionary approach

The Chief Justice says that the continuation of safety arrangements for the conduct of jury trials in court are consistent with the precautionary approach the courts have taken throughout the pandemic.

Jury trials have been held safely since August. The Chief Justice re-iterates that jurors can have confidence that their health and safety is seen to be of the utmost importance.

Notes for editors

Jury trials nationwide restarted on 3 August. They were suspended in the Auckland region on 12 August and restarted 7 September.

Helen Winkelmann

Chief Justice | Te Tumu Whakawā

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