



The Right Honourable Dame Helen Winkelmann

CHIEF JUSTICE OF NEW ZEALAND | TE TUMU WHAKAWĀ O AOTEAROA

MEDIA STATEMENT

28 February 2021

The Prime Minister announced on Saturday 27 February that Auckland will move to Alert Level 3 and the rest of the country will move to Alert Level 2 from 6 am on Sunday 28 February 2021 for seven days.

In response, the Chief Justice is today announcing the reinstatement of the Alert Level 2 and 3 protocols for the courts throughout New Zealand. “These changes in Alert Level are a well-trodden path for the courts. We have safely and successfully operated under these circumstances before, and with everyone’s continued cooperation and support, we will do so again” the Chief Justice said.

In Auckland

Criminal

For the Auckland High Court and Auckland and Manukau District Courts no new jury trials will start before Monday 8 March 2021.

Jury trials that were due to start on Monday 1 March in the Auckland courts will be adjourned or called over, to be determined on a case by case basis. Court staff will contact the parties directly regarding their specific case.

All jury trials underway will be suspended with the exception of one case in the Auckland High Court where the evidence has concluded, and the trial is in its final stages. Court staff will contact the parties in this trial directly.

Civil

All civil matters currently underway or due to start in the Auckland Courts will be reviewed, with as much work done by remote means as possible. Court staff will contact the parties directly.

Vulnerable participants

Practitioners or participants who are required to attend court while Auckland is at alert level three who are vulnerable either by age or due to health conditions should raise this with the court at the earliest opportunity.

The rest of New Zealand

The Chief Justice has re-confirmed that all trials scheduled to be heard in the rest of the country will continue as scheduled. Jurors summoned to attend or who are currently serving

on trials outside Auckland are requested to attend as per their summons document or any instruction from court registry staff.

In limited cases if the Court cannot accommodate jury trials in accordance with the Alert Level 2 restrictions, these trials will be adjourned or stood down. This decision will be made at the local level, and participants will be contacted directly.

Health and safety

The Ministry of Justice's health and safety arrangements for Alert Level 2 and 3 can be found on the Ministry of Justice's website.

Physical distancing arrangements are in place throughout all courthouses and screens will be in place for jury trials. Supplies of masks, gloves and hand sanitiser are available for all participants at court. Thermal imaging will be operational.

Media contact

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