



The Right Honourable Dame Helen Winkelmann

CHIEF JUSTICE OF NEW ZEALAND | TE TUMU WHAKAWĀ O AOTEAROA

23 January 2022

MEDIA STATEMENT

Court operations for the week of 24 January as the country moves to Red traffic light setting

The Prime Minister has announced that at 11.59pm tonight the country will move to the Red setting in the COVID-19 Protection Framework – the “traffic light” system.

Court operations from Monday 24 January to Friday 28 January 2022

This week, the Courts will continue to operate according to their **transitional protocols**. Under the transitional **Red** protocols, wherever possible, court work will be done remotely in order to limit the number of people required to attend court in person. The presiding judge may direct otherwise. All Court protocols are available [here on the Courts of New Zealand website](#).

Media access to courts under the transitional Red protocols

Media are asked to attend hearings remotely under the transitional Red protocols.

Court operations from Monday 31 January 2022

On 31 January, the Courts will begin to operate in accordance with their [COVID-19 Protection Framework Protocols](#). These protocols allow for increased in-person attendance at court, subject to entry requirements which will be in place from 31 January.

The entry requirements are set out in each Court’s protocol, and also on the Ministry of Justice website – see [Information for the public on entry requirements and health and safety practices in the courts](#).

Safeguarding the health of people in courthouses

The judiciary is committed to minimising the risk of transmission of COVID-19 in court buildings and continues to work closely with the Ministry of Justice on health and safety measures in the Courts.

Planning for Omicron

The Chief Justice said today that the Courts and the Ministry of Justice had taken account of the probability of an Omicron outbreak in their planning for court operations in 2022.

“Our focus in the last month has been on making sure the courts can continue to administer justice, with the minimum of disruption and delay possible, in the face of an Omicron

outbreak. To this end, we have taken steps to put in place strong public health measures in our court buildings. We will keep all arrangements under review as this current phase of the pandemic evolves so that court operating protocols continue to be fit for purpose.”

Key dates

- 31 January 2022: District Court jury trials commence.
- 31 January 2022: Courts begin operating in accordance with their new protocols under the COVID-19 Protection Framework, as operational capacity allows.
- 8 February 2022: High Court jury trials commence.

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