

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Guidance for all Alert Levels

Key Resources

Guidelines for staff entering a Community Corrections site

At ALL times ask the Ministry of Health COVID-19 health screening questions before/at every direct interaction with people on a sentence and visitors:

Screening Questions

1. Do you have any symptoms of COVID-19?
2. Are you or anyone in your household current waiting for a COVID test (or a COVID-19 test result) or been told by a health professional to isolate at home?
3. Have you been to an identified location of interest in the past 14 days?
4. Have you left an MIQ facility in the last 14 days?

Optional additional question for those sites near ports/airports

5. Do you work on an aircraft, shipping vessel, MIQ facility or in cold storage? **Note**, this group of workers has regular border testing, so should not prohibit access to the service – but inform use of PPE.

If the answer is YES to any of these questions, please check the [detailed guidance report to determine how to proceed](#)

- If anyone entering a Community Corrections site has responded **YES** (without a mitigation) to any of these questions, they should be refused entry and ring Healthline for advice.
- If any persons who will be present during a home visit (the person on-sentence, their whānau or other people in their bubble) has responded **YES**

(without a mitigation) to any of these questions, you should discuss the risks with a service manager before proceeding

- If a staff member or visitor responds **YES** (without a mitigation) to any of these questions, they must speak with a manager, return home and ring Healthline.
- Hand sanitiser must be used before entering the site
- Wash your hands frequently, and if necessary, apply hand sanitiser in between handwashing
- Keep common areas as clean as possible with regular disinfecting of high-tough surfaces (such as door handles). Wear gloves while sanitising surfaces/areas.
- Maintain physical distancing of at least **2m in public areas such as reception and at least 1m in non-public areas (office, kitchen, report-in rooms etc.)**
- Hand hygiene and cough / sneeze etiquette (maintain distance, cover coughs and sneezes with disposable tissues and wash hands) will continue to have a big impact

PPE Requirements in Community Corrections Environments

People on a sentence, Ara Poutama employees and visitors (including whānau and professionals) will be required to use PPE, as set out in the table below:

In scenarios where PPE is requested but not required, people should be reminded that PPE can provide a false sense of security, and good hand hygiene and not touching your face is the most effective protection against COVID-19 transmission in most circumstances.

It is noted that although **Community Corrections Sites are closed at Alert Level 4 and Alert Level 3** – there will be a few (very few) situations that sites are accessed e.g. to collect computers to use from home / to access the AVL for NZPB hearings / to collect a work vehicle if making an urgent visit etc.

In all these case a risk assessment should be undertaken and the default position is PPE should be used.

Scenario	Alert Level 1 See Keeping Safe at Community Corrections COVID-19 Alert Level 1 for further guidance	Alert Level 2	Alert Level 3	Alert Level 4
Working in an employee-only office space	<p>While employees are not required to wear PPE, it is available for use</p>	<p>Wearing a corrections issued mask is strongly recommended but not required. Physical distancing of at least 1 metre must be maintained.</p> <p>If a 1 metre distance cannot be maintained use of a corrections issued mask is required.</p> <p>Face masks should always be worn in small meetings rooms and in shared areas such as staff kitchens and bathrooms.</p>	<p>Activity ceased</p> <p>If site accessed undertake risk assessment should be undertaken and the default position is PPE should be used.</p>	<p>Activity ceased</p> <p>If site accessed undertake risk assessment should be undertaken and the default position is PPE should be used.</p>

Scenario	Alert Level 1 See Keeping Safe at Community Corrections COVID-19 Alert Level 1 for further guidance	Alert Level 2	Alert Level 3	Alert Level 4
Within the reception area	While employees and people on sentence are not required to wear PPE, it is available for use	<p>Masks (provided by Community Corrections) must be worn and a physical distance of 2 metres maintained by employees, people on sentence and visitors</p> <p>Where a person is alone in AL2, masks should be worn at all times.</p>	<p>Activity ceased</p> <p>If site accessed undertake risk assessment should be undertaken and the default position is PPE should be used.</p>	<p>Activity ceased</p> <p>If site accessed undertake risk assessment should be undertaken and the default position is PPE should be used.</p>
Working with service users in interview rooms (including in-person PAC interviews)	<p>While employees and people on sentence are not required to wear PPE, it is available for use</p> <p>All high-touch surfaces must be cleaned after use of the room</p>	<p>Mask must be worn (provided by Community Corrections) and physical distancing of at least 1 metre must be maintained</p> <p>All high-touch surfaces to be</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>Activity ceased</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>Activity ceased</p>

Scenario	Alert Level 1 See Keeping Safe at Community Corrections COVID-19 Alert Level 1 for further guidance	Alert Level 2	Alert Level 3	Alert Level 4
	(while wearing gloves and with handwashing afterwards)	cleaned after use of the room (while wearing gloves and with handwashing afterwards)		
Whānau hui at a Community Corrections site	<p>While employees, people on sentence and whānau and/or visitors are not required to wear PPE, it is available for use</p> <p>All high-touch surfaces must be cleaned after use of the room (while wearing gloves and with handwashing afterwards)</p>	<p>Whānau Hui only to be undertaken after all participants answer no to screening questions</p> <p>Physical distancing of 1 metre must be maintained and Corrections issued masks must be worn by all people in the room</p> <p>All high-touch surfaces to be cleaned after use of the room (while wearing gloves and with</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>Activity ceased</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>Activity ceased</p>

Scenario	Alert Level 1 See Keeping Safe at Community Corrections COVID-19 Alert Level 1 for further guidance	Alert Level 2	Alert Level 3	Alert Level 4
		handwashing afterwards)		
<p>Home visits See Undertaking Safe Visits Guide for information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing the need for a home visit Planning the visit (including pre-screening those you are visiting); and 	<p>Where pre-screening has not been possible for all occupants of an address, a mask and gloves are mandatory for home visits</p> <p>Mask and glove use are discretionary for home visits where pre-screening has been possible and there are no concerns for the health of any person residing at the address we intend to visit.</p> <p>Hand sanitiser should be utilised before</p>	<p>A corrections issued mask and gloves and physical distancing of at least 2 metres are mandatory for home visits even when there are no concerns for the health of any person residing at the address.</p> <p>Encourage that the person (as well as any whānau or other persons present) to wear a face covering during the home visit (these can be provided by Ara Poutama</p>	<p>Activity reduced (only essential visits to high risk and people who depend on us)</p> <p>Mask and gloves are mandatory for home visits where pre-screening has not been possible for all occupants of an address</p> <p>A face mask should be</p>	<p>Activity significantly reduced (only essential visits to high risk and people who depend on us)</p> <p>Mask and gloves are mandatory for home visits where pre-screening has not been possible for all occupants</p>

Scenario	Alert Level 1 See Keeping Safe at Community Corrections COVID-19 Alert Level 1 for further guidance	Alert Level 2	Alert Level 3	Alert Level 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal and disposal of PPE after the visit 	<p>and after the activity is completed.</p>	<p>Aotearoa, if needed)</p> <p>Hand sanitiser should be utilised before and after the activity is completed.</p>	<p>worn when undertaking any home visits.</p> <p>Glove use is discretionary, but encouraged. Please refer to the Undertaking Safe Visits Guide for information about mask use by people on-sentence.</p> <p>Hand sanitiser should be utilised before and after the activity is completed.</p>	<p>of an address</p> <p>It is a legal requirement for staff to wear a face mask when undertaking any home visit.</p> <p>Glove use is discretionary, but encouraged. Please refer to the Undertaking Safe Visits Guide for information about mask use by people on-sentence.</p>

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Scenario	Alert Level 1 See Keeping Safe at Community Corrections COVID-19 Alert Level 1 for further guidance	Alert Level 2	Alert Level 3	Alert Level 4
				<p>Hand sanitiser should be utilised before and after the activity is completed</p> <p>Physical distancing must be increased to 2m+</p>
Travelling in community work vans	All staff and community workers MUST wear a mask while in a community work vehicle	All staff and community workers MUST wear a mask (except when eating and drinking) and maintain a physical distance of 1 metre while in a community work vehicle and at all community work sites.	Community Work is ceased under Alert Level 3 – however Community Work vehicles and Community Work Staff may be utilised to transport	Community Work is ceased under Alert Level 4 – however Community Work vehicles and Community Work Staff may be utilised

Scenario	Alert Level 1 See Keeping Safe at Community Corrections COVID-19 Alert Level 1 for further guidance	Alert Level 2	Alert Level 3	Alert Level 4
		See Preparing Community Work Sites Level 2 for more details	prison leavers from prison to a home address, public transport not being available. PPE to be used as per the guidance	to transport prison leavers from prison to a home address, public transport not being available. PPE to be used as per the guidance
Working at community work sites (including Agency)	As long as a 2m distance can be maintained, the CWS or agency sponsor can make a decision about the use of PPE Work sites return to 8 workers plus a	A corrections issued mask and at least 1 metre distance must be maintained. Work sites are limited to 4 workers plus a community work supervisor	N/A Activity ceased	N/A Activity ceased

Scenario	Alert Level 1 See Keeping Safe at Community Corrections COVID-19 Alert Level 1 for further guidance	Alert Level 2	Alert Level 3	Alert Level 4
	community work supervisor			
Interactions at court, community accommodation on prison land, or any other necessary contact away from Community Corrections sites	<p>Whilst circumstances of each environment will vary the, the Ministry of Health guidance for physical distancing i.e. at least 2 metres apart should be followed. If physical distancing cannot be maintained, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including mask and gloves must be used.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Before commencing the task Confirm the availability and 	<p>The Ministry of Health guidance for physical distancing (at least 2 metres) and use of a mask should be followed.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Before commencing the task Confirm the availability and location of PPE and disposal bins 2. Consider the length of time you will need to continuously wear PPE and change to new PPE when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The mask has beco 	<p>All non-essential activity is ceased, otherwise follow Level 2 guidance</p> <p>See Working with Courts during COVID-19 for guidance</p>	<p>All non-essential activity is ceased, otherwise follow Level 2 guidance</p>

Scenario	Alert Level 1 See Keeping Safe at Community Corrections COVID-19 Alert Level 1 for further guidance	Alert Level 2	Alert Level 3	Alert Level 4
	<p>location of PPE and disposal bins</p> <p>2. Consider the length of time you will need to continuously wear PPE and change to new PPE when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The mask has become damp, soiled, damaged or hard to breathe through ○ Gloves when they have 	<p>me damp, soiled</p> <p>, damaged or hard to breathe through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gloves when they have become soiled or damaged ○ OR dispose of all PPE immediately after 		

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Scenario	Alert Level 1 See Keeping Safe at Community Corrections COVID-19 Alert Level 1 for further guidance	Alert Level 2	Alert Level 3	Alert Level 4
	<p>become soiled or damaged</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ OR dispose of all PPE immediately after being in close contact with a suspected or confirmed case. <p>3. Follow the four-step disposal process:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remove and safely dispose 	<p>being in close contact with a suspected or confirmed case.</p> <p>3. Follow the four-step disposal process:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Remove and safely dispose of gloves 2. Perform hand hygiene using alcohol-based hand sanitizer 3. Remove and dispos 		

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Scenario	Alert Level 1 See Keeping Safe at Community Corrections COVID-19 Alert Level 1 for further guidance	Alert Level 2	Alert Level 3	Alert Level 4
	<p>e of gloves</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Perform hand hygiene using alcohol-based hand sanitizer 3. Remove and dispose of mask into a rubbish bag 4. Perform hand hygiene again using alcohol-based hand sanitizer 	<p>e of mask into a rubbish bag</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Perform hand hygiene again using alcohol-based hand sanitizer 		

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Regional leadership teams, including the Regional Operations Director Health, should continue to make risk-based decisions about increasing the use of PPE for staff, where they believe it may be required. E.g. Where there is a change in the COVID-19 situation in the community, but no corresponding change in alert level, decisions can be made to increase the use of PPE to a higher alert level. Where there are unique operational environments that present additional risk, decisions on PPE use should be considered jointly with health and prison/regional leadership teams. Where increased use of PPE is occurring, COVID leads should advise logistics (procurement) to ensure enough stock is available.

Storing, Using, and Disposing of PPE

PPE stock must be used sparingly, but staff safety is paramount.

Gloves, masks and hand sanitiser for your site is to be ordered from your local prison.

Masks must be used as specified in the scenarios above

- Suitable masks are provided by Ara Poutama Aotearoa
- Other face coverings must not be used. This is because face coverings may assist with preventing someone who has COVID-19 from 'giving' it to another person, but face masks provide better protection for preventing both the 'giving' and 'receiving' of COVID-19. Replace the mask every 4 hours or if it becomes damp, damaged, soiled.

Gloves – safe use

- On occasions, people can be sensitive to materials and substances used in glove manufacture. The most common one being latex sensitivity. If you suspect or know you are sensitive (or allergic) to latex, ensure you use the nitrile gloves available.

- After using gloves or when taking a rest break, make sure you wash and dry your hands, let your hands 'breathe', take time to apply barrier cream or consider changing your gloves. Gloves will generally need to be changed when damaged or soiled, before going to rest breaks and using the bathroom, at a time period of every 2 hours or if hands become excessively sweaty inside the glove.
- When removing gloves, ensure you use the correct technique and peel back from the inside placing one glove inside the other and putting straight into the bin.
- Wash (or sanitise) your hands **BEFORE** you put on another pair of gloves.

Hand Hygiene

- It is important that we ensure our hand hygiene is as good as it can be - this will help reduce the risk of spreading any virus and germs.
- Hand hygiene is also vitally important where gloves are not specified as mandatory.
- Hand washing is the MOST effective way of removing any risk of virus getting into our system from hand contact.
- Warm water & soap - **20 seconds is needed.**
- Dry hands, especially between fingers and round wrists.
- NO need to apply sanitiser if you are going to put gloves straight on your hands after washing.
- Use barrier cream/hand cream when you can, especially if hands feel dry.
- If you notice **ANY** rash or itchiness on your hands - report into the H&S Tracker system so further advice can be provided.

Using Hand Sanitiser

- This is generally used when water and soap are NOT available.
- Some hand sanitisers can be irritating to the skin - if you know you have sensitive skin then DON'T use it! If you do use hand sanitiser, follow these tips:
- One pump of sanitiser is sufficient to clean the hands.

- More is not always better.
- Ensure the sanitiser has absorbed into your skin BEFORE you put on gloves (damp hands inside the gloves will increase the risk of skin problems)
- Alcohol based sanitiser must not be accessible by prisoners. A small amount can be applied to their hands for them to use, observed by staff, but they must not have free access to alcohol-based sanitiser. All alcohol-based sanitiser in prisons must be well controlled and stored/locked appropriately.

Skin Problems

By following the guidance provided and assuming you have no known allergies to substances, latex etc - skin problems should not normally occur.

If you notice any rashes, increased itching, swelling of your fingers or hands which are NOT normal for you - then report this immediately and wait for advice on how best to proceed.

Disposing of PPE

- All PPE needs to be disposed of in the biohazard bin

Further guidance on how to use PPE effectively can be found on the [Ministry of Health's website](#)

Last Published: 22.09.2021 | By: Bex Elowen | Content owner: Case Management and Probation Practice