

# **Questions & Answers COVID 19**

From the Paekākāriki Community Board

**6 April 2020**

Thanks to Flo for opening up this conversation for questions. Please note that Community Board members are not experts on COVID-19 or alert level 4, nor are we going to police anyone. Our role is to pass on official advice and guidance, to identify the gaps in that information and refer those questions to the officials for an answer.

We have compiled a document that pulls together the official information to answer the questions that you have asked. There are some questions which haven't been answered with official advice yet and new guidelines are introduced daily so it's a moving beast that we're dealing with. Even the science is still being settled (see the last question about physical distancing). Therefore, we will look to update the document as new information becomes available. We have shared links to any of our sources and would encourage anyone wanting to know more or look for other information to visit the official government websites. The most common questions are answered in the [FAQs](#) section of the covid19.govt.nz site.

<https://covid19.govt.nz/>

<https://www.health.govt.nz/>

For local updates <http://paekakariki.nz/>

The first place we went to is the law itself, that is, the legislation and the orders made by the Director-General of Health under the Health Act 1956. The answers to most of your questions can be found in these orders. Using the legal expertise within the Community Board, we've paraphrased the two relevant orders here. Follow the links for the full wording of the orders. The interpretation of the orders is always up for debate. The Prime Minister has asked us all to act as if we already have COVID-19 and we think that's a useful place from which to interpret the guidance, which obviously can't cover every situation.

- The order under the [s 70\(1\)\(f\) of the Health Act](#) **requires everyone to remain at their current place of residence (their bubble) “except as permitted for essential personal movement”**, which only includes:
  - leaving your bubble for the purpose of accessing an essential business for your own, or any “fellow resident’s” (that is, from within your own bubble) needs or on behalf of vulnerable people and those at an elevated risk (that is those people from outside your bubble who are at significant risk if they contract COVID-19)
  - leaving your bubble for the purpose of providing an “essential business”, travelling to your essential business’s workplace, or assisting someone else (from your bubble) to travel to their essential business workplace
  - leaving your bubble for the purpose of exercise or other recreation if:
    - it is outside and “can be readily accessed” from your bubble
    - you maintain physical distancing (that is, 2 metres away from those not in your bubble or if closer, being there for less than 15 minutes)
    - it “does not involve swimming, water-based activities (for example, surfing or boating), hunting, tramping, or other activities of a kind that expose participants to danger or may require search and rescue services”
  - moving between two residences in a “shared bubble arrangement”, that is, those sharing parenting between two houses, or two residences where there are people who live alone or all people are vulnerable in one or both of the two residences
  - leaving your bubble in emergencies or by compulsion, that is:
    - leaving to preserve your own or someone else’s safety or life
    - having to move to temporary or emergency accommodation (eg if sick and needing care or seeking refuge from violence)
    - moving as a result of a court order requiring you to move
    - helping someone to move for the above three reasons
  - as otherwise officially authorised.
- The order under [s 70\(1\)\(m\) of the Health Act](#) gives some clarity (paraphrased, see the link for the actual wording):
  - The Director-General of Health clearly forbids” people to congregate in outdoor places of amusement or recreation of any kind or description whether public or private in all districts of New Zealand until further notice”

- He clarifies that “congregate” does not include people maintaining at all times physical distancing, which is defined as remaining 2 metres away from others or, if closer than 2 metres, being there for less than 15 minutes
- Those found guilty of breaching the order are liable for a fine of up to \$4000, up to 6 months’ imprisonment or both.
- Essential businesses are those listed on the [Essential services list](#) on the covid19 website.

Neither order defines what “can be readily accessed” from your bubble means in terms of recreation and exercise.

### **Questions from the community**

*What can we trade (or not) here on PT? In a time when many of us find we need certain items it feels like the obvious place to source them. Is it ok for me to offer my surplus feijoas to the community here? What if I can't work because a vital piece of my home office has broken? Can I ask the community for a loan item if I 'sanitise' it?*

- While the order under s 70(1)(f) of the Health Act doesn’t expressly prohibit the sharing of unessential items, they are not included in the very limited list of what can be done. The order clearly allows you to leave your bubble only to access or provide essential services and undertake limited recreation. So sharing such things as food, replacement appliances or office supplies that are necessary, warm clothes etc for those who need it seems to be allowed; sharing craft supplies, toys and so on is not.
- Here’s guidance from the [covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz) site on shopping safely, some of which would also apply to food and other essential items shared within the village.
- Here is the link to volunteering guidelines which were put together by Volunteer Kāpiti, adapted from Volunteering Central NZ (done in conjunction with the Ministry of Health) : <https://docs.google.com/document/d/182IGVVE-Bk0WxK8r2n5ROzC4N01NNjilZSkznsYV Rjg/edit?usp=sharing>. This contains some useful information about the handling of items and the precautions that should be taken when delivering items.

*What is the protocol for DOG WALKING? Can I walk my dog off-leash if it's in a 'normally' off leash area? (i.e North of the stream). What about if it's after dark and there's nobody around?*

- **Message from Kapiti Coast District Council:** “For everyone's safety, we've had to make a few changes for our normally off-leash areas in the Kāpiti Coast district. While we're at Alert Level 4, please keep your dogs on a leash even in normally off-leash areas. This will help ensure they're not spreading the virus between bubbles through contact with other dogs or people, and will also help reduce the calls we get for dog incidents. Keep your dog in your own bubble – on lead at all times, everywhere, during COVID-19 Level 4. Here's Jacquie Muir, the KCDC Environmental Standards Manager, with more.”  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_VZoWYIJvAw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_VZoWYIJvAw)
- We haven't found any mention of curfews or restrictions on being outside after dark.

*Is it ok to walk down to the beach in front of our home and go surfing there, keeping a safe distance from others, and staying within the scope of my surfing abilities? Even on this page there has been a lot of confusion about this.*

- The order under [s 70\(1\)\(f\) of the Health Act](#) (paraphrased here) says you may leave your bubble for the purpose of exercise or other recreation if:
  - it is outside and “can be readily accessed” from your bubble
  - you maintain physical distancing (that is, 2 metres away from those not in your bubble or if closer, being there for less than 15 minutes)
  - it “does not involve swimming, water-based activities (for example, surfing or boating), hunting, tramping, or other activities of a kind that expose participants to danger or may require search and rescue services”
- The [covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz) site clearly says:
  - “only exercise alone or with the people you live with
  - if you're exercising outside and it's too busy to keep a 2-metre distance from others, go home — go out later
  - help our emergency services by only doing safe activities, such as going for a walk;
  - don't do activities that may require search and rescue services. For example, **don't go swimming, surfing, boating, hunting or tramping**
  - don't touch surfaces others may have touched — avoid park benches or playgrounds
  - Surf Life Saving New Zealand is among those reminding people that such activities are not allowed right now. “Please - no rock fishing, fishing from a boat, surfing, kite surfing, knee boarding, stand-up paddle boarding, paddling, snorkelling, surf ski or diving etc during the Covid-19 lockdown.”

- For more guidance on exercising safely (and using your car), see the [covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz) site.

*Can pets transmit the virus to humans, and if so is it dangerous for my dogs to snuffle pooh on our section from wandering cats and rabbits? What are my options if that's happening. eg. May I capture and humanely quarantine wandering pets?*

- We can't find any official guidance on this so we've asked KCDC to answer your question. In the meantime, please treat your pets as part of your bubble.

*Can I go surfcast fishing or put out a long-line with a kontiki? (no kayaking or swimming involved)*

- The order under [s 70\(1\)\(f\) of the Health Act](#) (paraphrased here) says you may leave your bubble for the purpose of exercise or other recreation if:
  - it is outside and “can be readily accessed” from your bubble
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  - help our emergency services by only doing safe activities, such as going for a walk;
  - don't do activities that may require search and rescue services. For example, **don't go swimming, surfing, boating, hunting or tramping**
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- The guidance on the [covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz) site talks about avoiding “activities where you can get injured or lost. For example, don't go swimming, surfing, boating, hunting or tramping.

It's important the emergency services remain available to support the response to COVID-19." No mention of surf casting so the question to ask yourself is, can I (or someone else) get injured or lost? Will I need emergency services?

*I live alone and share a bubble with another household. Can you please clarify what the rules around this are?*

- Yes you can share a bubble with one other household if you live alone or if everyone in one of the two households is a "vulnerable person" (for example, two elderly people in one household can share with another household) and you and the others in your shared bubble can move between the two properties: see para 2(g) of the order under [s 70\(1\)\(f\) of the Health Act](#).
- The definition of a 'shared bubble arrangement' as noted in that order is "an agreement by all of the residents (other than children) of no more than 2 residences within the same or adjacent health districts to quarantine in accordance with this order as if they were 1 residence."

*Is it okay for us to keep planting veges at the community garden for the coming months? Say, as individuals working on our own with gloves. We don't know what the situation will be in the months ahead but we'd like to think we can supply food if it's needed.*

- The order under the [s 70\(1\)\(f\) of the Health Act](#) **requires everyone to remain at their current place of residence (their bubble) "except as permitted for essential personal movement"**, which only includes:
  - leaving your bubble for the purpose of accessing an essential business for your own, or any "fellow resident's" (that is, from within your own bubble) needs or on behalf of vulnerable people and those at an elevated risk (that is those people from outside your bubble who are at significant risk if they contract COVID-19)
  - leaving your bubble for the purpose of providing an "essential business", travelling to your essential business's workplace, or assisting someone else (from your bubble) to travel to their essential business workplace
  - And other situations that are not relevant here.
- Here's [guidance](#) for community groups on the covid19.govt.nz site. It talks about events and gatherings being forbidden. If you're doing this together it could be seen as a gathering or event.
- Is the community garden an essential service and has POG put in place adequate guidelines and processes to keep everyone safe? See [guidance](#) on the covid19.govt.nz page. The list of essential services does say "Plant nurseries which supply primary

industries are considered to be essential and may continue operating. Plant nurseries not supplying primary industries are not considered to be essential services and may not operate.”

- Our advice is to seek further guidance. Here’s what the [covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz/essential-businesses) page on [essential businesses](https://www.covid19.govt.nz/essential-businesses) says:
  - “If you have any queries about what an essential service is and if it applies to your business sector, you can call 0800 22 66 57 or email [essential@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:essential@mbie.govt.nz) for advice regarding your specific business.
  - For questions related to primary industries, including food and beverage production and processing, email [info@mpi.govt.nz](mailto:info@mpi.govt.nz) or call 0800 00 83 33.”

***I am in a bubble with whanau. I am 70+ with immune and respiratory health issues. A family member in my bubble is an essential worker and out in the community most days of the week. We are practicing physical distance as best we can. Is it ok to share food prepared by the family?***

- All essential workers should practice risk-minimising and good hygiene habits when coming back into the home. Here’s some [guidance](#) for businesses from the [covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz) site for keeping their staff safe, which can be used at home as well. It doesn’t specifically mention food sharing but it’s clearly important that all steps are taken to ensure there is no transmission of the virus on plates and so on. It’s worth checking out the [guidance](#) for those people who are unwell and sharing a bubble with others too.
- Note there is an [essential workers leave scheme](#) in place, which may provide support of an essential worker needs to stay at home in order to protect themselves, vulnerable members of their bubble or others.

***How far from our homes can we travel when walking/running/biking for recreation? <5km would mean most of QE Park and Whareroa would be ok***

- Government advice is to ‘Stay local’. But it’s not clear what those boundaries are.
- The order under the [s 70\(1\)\(f\) of the Health Act](#) allows you to leave your bubble for the purpose of exercise or other recreation if (paraphrased here, see the link for the actual wording):
  - it is outside and “can be readily accessed” from your bubble

- you maintain physical distancing (that is, 2 metres away from those not in your bubble or if closer, being there for less than 15 minutes)
  - it “does not involve swimming, water-based activities (for example, surfing or boating), hunting, tramping, or other activities of a kind that expose participants to danger or may require search and rescue services”
- The order under [s 70\(1\)\(m\) of the Health Act](#) gives some clarity about exercising and recreating together (paraphrased here, see the link for the actual wording):
  - The Director-General of Health clearly forbids” people to congregate in outdoor places of amusement or recreation of any kind or description whether public or private in all districts of New Zealand until further notice”
  - He clarifies that “congregate” does not include people maintaining at all times physical distancing, which is defined as remaining 2 metres away from others or, if closer than 2 metres, being there for less than 15 minutes
- Neither order defines what “can be readily accessed” from your bubble means in terms of recreation and exercise. Here’s what the [FAQs](#) section of the covid19.govt.nz site says about staying local:

“Please stay at home as much as you can. Any unnecessary travel could spread COVID-19. If you are over 70, or are immunosuppressed, you should not be leaving the house at all.

Some people will need to go outside occasionally. For example to take a short walk for exercise or mental wellbeing, or to visit local essential services like the doctor, pharmacy or supermarket.

Your local area means the area near your home that you regularly visit for essential services.

What is considered local will differ depending on where you live. City dwellers may have a supermarket or dairy close by. If you live rurally, you may need to take a drive to reach these.

If you live in an area where a walk in the neighbourhood isn’t practical, you can drive a short distance to reach an area, like a beach, where you can go for a quick walk. If the beach is busy, and you can’t stay 2 metres away from other people, go home. Do not stay at the beach and sunbathe and please do not swim.

If you do leave your house, you must always keep a 2 metre distance from other people who are not part of your isolation group. If an area is too crowded to keep to a 2 metre space between you and others, go home. Don’t stop and chat, contact people over the phone or social media instead.”



***In QE Park and Whareroa some gates have been tied open already, while others have been left open and others have been shut. Should we be tying all gates open so people don't have to touch latches? (when there is little to no risk of stock causing issues).***

From GWRC:

- We have opened all the gates to allow smooth travel through the park on the major tracks. This allows the visitors to avoid queuing and minimises contact with surfaces. We have found some people shutting gates as they normally do. We are continuing to reopen these and secure in an open fashion. Please request that people leave gates as they find them, we will continue to monitor and manage the situation.
- With this comes some issues, we have had a couple of instances of motorbikes on trails. If people see this then please contact the police immediately with as much detail as possible.
- On narrow tracks in places speed of cycles is an issue, a couple of close calls have been noted, we need people to share with care and look out for everyone's safety.
- Please ask people to keep dogs on leads through this period regardless of normal behaviour, KCDC are also requesting this as well.
- We are getting reports of wasp nests and we are dealing with these on a regular basis, any that pose a danger to public safety being highest priority. A photo of the location with a good description is always helpful. Report these and any other issues through our contact centre phone or email from GWRC website.

***Could a group of neighbours 'meet' up at the end of their own driveways for a morning coffee or afternoon chat (each day), keeping more than 2 m apart?***

- Government advice is to stay at home if you can, and only head out for essential supplies and exercise.
- These kinds of 'meet ups' have been happening globally. It's important that everyone is following the requirements to remain 2 metres apart while out of your bubbles.
- Note however the [latest advice from Dr Siouxi Wiles](#) to not do this - she says the science on Covid-19 is still being developed and sneezes can travel 8 metres. She advises people to stop catching up at the end of driveways and to catch up by video-conferencing like Skype, Zoom etc instead. This isn't on the government website and so is not official advice, but worth considering.
- If you need help with video tools then please contact us and we'll try to hook you up with someone who can talk through the online tools. They're really easy to use!

***What precautions are needed if someone is dropping off groceries to a neighbour / someone who lives in their suburb?***

- Here's guidance from the [covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz) site on shopping safely, some of which would also apply to food and other essential items shared within the village.
- Here is the link to volunteering guidelines which were put together by Volunteer Kāpiti, adapted from Volunteering Central NZ (done in conjunction with the Ministry of Health) : <https://docs.google.com/document/d/182IGVVE-Bk0WxK8r2n5ROzC4N01NNjilZSkznsYVRjg/edit?usp=sharing>. This contains some useful information about the handling of items and the precautions that should be taken when delivering items.

***Could two people (in different bubbles) talk across the road from each other, staying on opposite sides? (e.g. a chat for 10 or 15 mins)***

- Government advice is to stay at home if you can, and only head out for essential supplies and exercise.
- These kinds of 'meet ups' have been happening globally. It's important that everyone is following the requirements to remain 2 metres apart while out of your bubbles.
- Note however the [latest advice from Dr Siouxie Wiles](#) to not do this - she says the science on Covid-19 is still being developed and sneezes can travel 8 metres. She advises people to stop catching up at the end of driveways and to catch up by video-conferencing like Skype, Zoom etc instead. This isn't on the government website and so is not official advice, but worth considering.
- If you need help with video tools then please contact us and we'll try to hook you up with someone who can talk through the online tools. They're really easy to use!

***What are the official guidelines for swimming at the beach, surfing and mountain biking? (these have all been discussed by various leaders/experts, sometimes in conflicting ways - and there isn't any info on the Covid-19 website about these)***

- The order under [s 70\(1\)\(f\) of the Health Act](#) (paraphrased here) says you may leave your bubble for the purpose of exercise or other recreation if:
  - it is outside and "can be readily accessed" from your bubble
  - you maintain physical distancing (that is, 2 metres away from those not in your bubble or if closer, being there for less than 15 minutes)
  - it "does not involve swimming, water-based activities (for example, surfing or boating), hunting, tramping, or other activities of a kind that expose participants to danger or may require search and rescue services"
- The [covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz) site clearly says:

- “only exercise alone or with the people you live with
- if you're exercising outside and it's too busy to keep a 2-metre distance from others, go home — go out later
- help our emergency services by only doing safe activities, such as going for a walk;
- don't do activities that may require search and rescue services. For example, **don't go swimming, surfing, boating, hunting or tramping**
- don't touch surfaces others may have touched — avoid park benches or playgrounds
- Surf Life Saving New Zealand is among those reminding people that such activities are not allowed right now. "Please - no rock fishing, fishing from a boat, surfing, kite surfing, knee boarding, stand-up paddle boarding, paddling, snorkelling, surf ski or diving etc during the Covid-19 lockdown.”
- The guidance on the [covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz) site talks about avoiding “activities where you can get injured or lost. For example, don't go swimming, surfing, boating, hunting or tramping. It's important the emergency services remain available to support the response to COVID-19.” No mention of mountain biking but ask yourself is, can I (or someone else) get injured or lost? Will I need emergency services?

***Is anything from a site that is NOT .govt.nz official?***

- No.
- .govt.nz sites are the official places to go to get the most up-to-date accurate information. The rest is opinion, possible expert opinion, but not official.
- The covid19.govt.nz website will be updated regularly and is the best source for official information.

***Is what officials say in the afternoon briefings official? What if they are contradictory to what is written on official websites (e.g. Jacinda said walk your car to the beach...)***

- No.
- .govt.nz sites are the official places to go to get the official information. The briefings help to flesh out things, but they are not the law and where there is a conflict between what is said in a briefing and what is written in the orders and on official websites, rely on the written information. However, remember that this is a rapidly-evolving situation and often

statements made in the briefings may point to a change, tightening or clarification of the rules and information on the official website will then be updated, so check in with the official website often for areas that are not settled or are evolving.

- The [covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz) website is updated regularly and is the best source for official information.
- News sites do not provide official information and are often reporting opinions. It's best to check out what they say by going to [covid19.govt.nz](https://www.covid19.govt.nz)