



**The Right Honourable Dame Helen Winkelmann**  
**Chief Justice of New Zealand**  
**Te Tumu Whakawā o Aotearoa**

14 February 2021

**MEDIA STATEMENT**

The Prime Minister has announced today that Auckland will move to Alert Level 3 and the rest of the country will move to Alert Level 2 from 11.59pm on Sunday 14 February 2021 for three days.

**In Auckland**

**Criminal**

No new criminal jury trials will start in the Auckland High Court, and Auckland and Manukau District Courts before Thursday 18 February. Jury trials currently underway will be suspended until Thursday unless the jury trial has reached the deliberation stage. Court staff will contact participants, including jurors, for trials that have reached the deliberation stage.

Jurors who have been summonsed to attend, or who are serving on trials in the Auckland High Court, and District Court at Manukau and Auckland are therefore excused from attendance at court on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Jurors will be contacted by court staff regarding attendance for the rest of the week.

Judge alone trials scheduled for this week will be reviewed. Court staff will contact you if you have a judge alone trial set down for this week.

**Civil**

Civil matters for the Auckland High Court will be reviewed to see if they can proceed using remote participation. Court staff will contact you if you have a civil matter set down in the Auckland High Court in the next three days.

**The rest of New Zealand**

The Chief Justice has re-confirmed that trials scheduled to be heard in the rest of the country will continue as scheduled, provided they can be accommodated safely in accordance with Alert Level 2 restrictions. Jurors summonsed 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 staff.

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It may be that in limited cases where the Court cannot safely accommodate a jury trials at Alert Level 2. Those trials will be adjourned or stood down. This decision will be made at the local level, and court staff will contact participants, including jurors, directly.

### **Other Courts**

Information as to the operation of other courts at Alert Level 3 (Auckland) and Alert Level 2 (the rest of New Zealand) will be placed on the Courts of New Zealand website. [courtsfnz.govt.nz](https://courtsfnz.govt.nz)

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. [justice.govt.nz/covid-19-information/](https://justice.govt.nz/covid-19-information/)

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.

A further statement will be made once more is known about the likely duration of the Alert Level 3 restrictions.

### **Media contact**

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