



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

28 August 2020

MEDIA STATEMENT
MASKS IN COURT from MONDAY 31 AUGUST 2020

Auckland will move to Alert Level 2 from 11:59 pm on Sunday 30 August 2020, with additional limits for at least a week. The rest of the country remains at Alert Level 2.

This statement explains the courts' policy for masks in the Auckland region starting from Monday 31 August. It also encourages the use of masks in courthouses elsewhere in the country.

The Chief Justice has advised that, because of concerns about community transmission of COVID-19, all those attending courts in the Auckland region should wear masks in public spaces and courtrooms. Those attending court will be reminded of this at the security screening stations. Attendees will be offered a mask if they do not already have one.

Counsel, defendants, parties and witnesses may be required to remove masks when speaking in court or otherwise by judicial direction.

The Chief Justice stated this policy follows feedback from representatives of the legal profession and the community in Auckland that wearing masks will assist with building confidence in attending court while community transmission continues.

The Chief Justice reminded court participants of the safety and hygiene arrangements the Ministry of Justice has in place in all courthouses at Alert Level 2. An enhanced cleaning regime continues, appropriate physical distancing arrangements are in place and there are supplies of masks, gloves and hand sanitiser for all participants at court.

In accordance with courts' protocols for operation at Alert Level 2, the wearing of masks is encouraged in courts elsewhere in the country.

Helen Winkelmann
Chief Justice | Te Tumu Whakawā

Media contact

Lyn Eden
Visitor Services Officer
027 462 8377 lyn.eden@courts.govt.nz

Supreme Court of New Zealand | Te Kōti Mana Nui
85 Lambton Quay | Wellington
PO Box 61 | DX SX 11224
Telephone 64 4 918 8222 | Facsimile 64 4 914 3560